PHILLIDA

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PHILLIDA

OR

The Reluctant Adventurer

By H. S. Reid

THE 'reluctant adventurer' of the story is Richard Carey, a young gentleman of the University whose fortune had been entirely swallowed up in the wave of Cromwell's campaigns. Phillida is the lovely girl who has been his sweetheart from childhood. But in a single day he loses both her and his own freedom when he is taken in a Roundhead raid. Condemned to death, he escapes, only to be shipped abroad to toil in the African mines.

Escaping at length from the hardships and perils of the mine, he finds sanctuary with a Portuguese who has set up a new Carthage among the blacks. Richard becomes the leader and eventually the inheritor of this savage state, wars with the Dutch and the natives, and after his long exile returns at length to England, the place of his boyish love.

Seldom does one find an historical novel that marches with such directness and speed.

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PHILLIDA

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or

THE RELUCTANT ADVENTURER

By H. S. REID

BOSTON & NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
1928

TO

A. H. S. R.

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PHILLIDA

I

On a May night in 1651, when Charles I had been dead for two years; and Charles II was a Presbyterian in Scotland, harried by the Lord General Oliver Cromwell, who was not yet Protector; and England was governed by the House of Commons without King or Lords; a tall young man called Richard Carey lay abed at Twyning near Tewkesbury. He was reading a treatise on astronomy, 'The New Planet no Planet, or the Earth no wandering Star, Except in the Wandering heads of Galileans'.

Mr. Carey was not an astronomer, but, as a student of the Law, he thought himself qualified by his profession to judge between any two disputants. If he had not yet heard the Galileans, his author, Dr. Alexander Ross, was so obliging as to furnish him with the opinions of one among them. 'He,' says the Doctor, 'holds that the world, ever since Adam, hath been in a dream, in thinking that the heavens move and that the earth stands still. He tells us another tale, to wit, that it is the earth that moveth, and the heavens stand still.'

Mr. Carey lifted up his smarting eyes and wished that the candle would be still. It was a rush dipped in tallow, and its two ends dangling from a pewter stand burnt with smoky and uncertain flames. He wondered that his

hosts should choose to go to bed by such an old-fashioned light, and remembered that only one of them would ever wish to read there.

His own mind was not fixed upon his reading. He rolled over on his back and watched the rush-light flicker upon the crimson linsey-woolsey bed curtains. He buried himself in the coarse linen sheets and sniffed the mingled smells of lavender and tallow. He heard Christopher Baugh snoring beside him and pitied his repose. Kit was the best good fellow in England; but his dreams were sober like his waking thoughts. Though he should marry an alderman's daughter and drive to Heaven in his own coach and six, Kit could never have Phillida.

Mr. Carey's thoughts left the Baughs' guest chamber and carried him to a garden nine miles away across Severn, to a narrow path from the house door to that bench where her father methodized his sermons in warm weather. It was evening again, and again he heard her skirts brush against the tulips that a Dutch divine had sent her from the Hague, and saw the pear blossom strewn upon the flags.

They had walked up and down several times talking gravely of indifferent things. He told her he had come to Gloucestershire to help Christopher Baugh, who was steward that year at Winchcombe Court Leet. She said Master Christopher Baugh had been named to her as a sober, prudent young man, and Richard was grateful because she valued Christopher. She told him that her father had seen Master Roger Baugh at Ledbury last

market day. Richard might have said much about Roger, who was courting a widow; but he thought that his Phillida did not love the widow, so he said little and they had fallen into a silence; only Phillida remarked how sweetly the thrushes were singing, which was news from her, who had always seen in them the thieves that stole her cherries.

Mr. Richard Carey was known in several taverns of repute as a young gentleman of pleasant conversation; but he knew his goddess too well to profane her silences with words. In this silence he had found something new which put his spirits in a whirl and set him thinking of the sculptor whose statue turned into a woman. In the dusk she was pale, like the blossom, and her eyes were hidden by their long lashes. But, looking at her sideways, he perceived that she was smiling to herself. Her breath came unevenly and her steps were uneven too; there was a kind of freedom in her motions as though she were dancing to a secret measure. Besides, her hair, which she commonly wore strained back under a cap, was uncovered that night, and fell in curls upon her cheeks and forehead.

It happened that, while they were walking together, one of these curls had been caught up in a low hanging bough. She had given him leave to set her free, an office which, for the trembling of his hands, he was scarcely able to perform. That had been his time; with another woman he might have known how to use it. But when he touched her hair she was a statue again, an image half goddess

and half saint. He had let the moment slip, and was angry and sad because, when he was near her, she was farther from him than when he was away.

The air had grown cold; the sweetness of flowers was mixed with the smell of newly dug earth, the thrush songs were so many dirges, and Phillida, walking quietly in the half light, with her white face and her drooping lashes, was not a woman to be warmed by love, but only a chill ghost. He had resolved then, as he had done once or twice before, to stay away and think of her no longer.

When they came back to the hedge by the lane where he had left his horse, she had stopped, as intending that he should depart. So he went out through the gate, shutting it behind him; for her intentions were commands, and he knew very well that he had nothing to gain by disobeying them. But, while his hand was still upon the latch, she had told him there was something he must know. It was written in a letter which one of her father's parishioners, who had gone into Ledbury with his ducks and chickens, was to give to the carrier there to take to Richard at Twyning. She had said this, not with her own ingenuous plainness, but with some marks of confusion which he had never observed in her before.

As he stood staring up at her (for the garden was three steps higher than the lane) she, stooping suddenly, had kissed him upon the bridge of his nose. Before he could jump the gate to take her in his arms she had run into the house.

The recollection of that kiss moved him extremely. Its falling where it did helped to remove it from such kisses as he had received from other ladies who, with more experience in the business, had chosen their ground more skilfully. Those kisses had been his due as a soldier and a young gentleman of loyal principles and good fashion, but he wished now that he had never had them; they made him the less worthy of hers. He was thankful that his nose at least had never been profaned by another woman; it came to her a virgin. Jesting thus to himself he was ashamed of jesting. Let her kiss him where she would, there was a solemnity in her kissing him at all, she did not deal in such airy courtesies, conscience and discretion ordered every part of her behaviour. 'I know her conscience,' thought he. '"Thorough" is its watchword. If it bids her kiss me it will make her my wife.'

He was not, in general, more modest than other young men; but this notion filled him with a kind of awe. He, who had mocked her in his thoughts, though tenderly enough, compared himself now with Anchises, who was beloved of Venus, or with Endymion, who was visited by the moon.

They could not be married yet; he had only sixty-five pounds a year and a cupboard full of law books, a fortune which he thought too small to support a wife who could bring him no more than a box of linen with twenty shillings for her portion. He had been concerned in the rising of '48, serving under Sir George Lisle

in the Royalist army which surrendered at Colchester. His estate, which had once been a good one, was swallowed up afterwards in fines and confiscations, all but a remnant saved to him through the solicitations of his good friend Christopher Baugh. This Christopher, Richard's old school-fellow, belonged by nature and inheritance to the Parliamentary party. Himself a student at the Inner Temple, he had persuaded Richard to invest his remnant in the Law, arguing that it was great wickedness, as well as folly, for a man to engage his countrymen in desperate wars, and that it better became a good citizen to sink his private opinions and live peaceably under the government de facto; at least, until he could be reasonably sure of overturning it.

Mr. Carey had disputed this; yet, as perpetual dripping wears away a stone, he was moved by degrees from his first conclusions. The glory was not altogether Christopher's; he had as his ally the lady who, from her childhood, had been called Richard's wife.

The lady was Phillida. She had been bred with Richard in the family of Sir Robert Cooke at Highnam near Gloucester; he a forward, active boy, and she with the green shoots of that godliness which she later so eminently displayed. There her virtues had won her little kindness, for Sir Robert's second wife, the widow of holy Mr. Herbert of Bemerton, could never relish that kind of sainthood which is opposed to Episcopacy. That kind was Phillida's, whose mother, a Fleetwood, and cousin to Sir Robert's first wife, had taken her so often to conven-

ticles that at six years old she knew every trick of piety, turning her eyes up and the pages of her Bible down like the She Precise Hypocrite which the ladies of the family took her for.

It happened when Richard and Phillida were not more than six or seven years old, they once sat by a fire where the maids were roasting apples and talking. To pass the time, these began to foretell the future, finding out their husbands' names with peascods and other trifles. When they had found good husbands for themselves and fine marriages for the Miss Cookes, who were to have lords and great gentlemen, with coaches to ride in and money to spare, they diverted themselves with the children, vowing that the little girl would never be married; a penniless young creature who looked so pale and sour could never find a husband; she must die a maid and lead her ape in Hell. She had begun at last to weep, protesting that she would not live in Hell with ugly apes and devils; but they only laughed the more, till Richard was moved to declare that she need not die a maid, he would marry her himself as soon as he was old enough. This was too good a joke to lose; from that time she was 'Madam Carey'; but their laughter could not move him, he was ready to defend her against them all.

Five years later, after Sir Robert's death and about the time that Highnam was laid waste, Richard's father came home from abroad. That was in the second year of the troubles, a little while before the siege, when the family were living in Gloucester. Perceiving that

that city was no longer a fit place for his son, Mr. Carey the elder had fetched him away and put him to school in loyal Worcester. Thus the two children were parted, her father having a lectureship, though a small one, in Gloucester in the parish of St. Mary Crypt, and looking for preferment to Colonel Massey, the Parliamentary governor.

Richard's father was killed at Naseby, and he himself had come out in the Second Civil War with other young gentlemen of loyal families who had been too young to appear before. He had always intended to return and marry Phillida, but had been very well content to wait, until he saw her again after the siege of Colchester, when he was living on parole with the Baughs. The pale child had become a goddess; and, though it was beyond even her power to make him swallow the National Covenant, for her sake he had taken an oath not to bear arms against the Parliament, and for her he slaved at the law. By the old hard custom he had still to study for five more years before he was called to the Bar; but this did not seem too hard for him. Remembering Jacob, who had served so long for a wife, he pitied him, for he thought that his Phillida was fairer than Rachel.

Another man might have been content to lie still and dream of his good fortune; but young Richard did not love to lie still. More especially when he was moved by great sorrow or great joy did he desire to ride, to wrestle, to dispute; relieving, by such exercises of his body or his tongue, the overflowing of his heart and

fancy. The guest chamber, hung with painted cloths of Queen Elizabeth's time, was close like a prison. He tossed upon the square feather bed as though it had been stuffed with thorns, and thought of Avon sliding through the meadows a quarter of a mile away.

The more he thought of those pleasant waters the more he longed to swim in them by starlight; but he knew that she would condemn that plan as neither prudent nor sober. He thought of his letter, which would not reach Twyning before he had set out for Winchcombe Castle. The carrier travelled slowly; if Richard met him upon the road he might have his letter and go to Winchcombe too. He reached for his watch and found that it had stopped. He dived under the pillows for Christopher's. By Christopher's watch (in which, as in everything else that belonged to his friend, Mr. Carey entirely confided) it was only half-past two. He turned again to 'The New Planet no Planet', and read, 'But that the earth may be a planet is as true as that the sun may be a burning stone, that there may be a man in the moon, that there may be an infinite number of suns and worlds. . . . But I remember what Aristotle saith . . that which may be may not be and never shall be'.

Mr. Carey had heard too much of Aristotle. He flung out his arms, chanting 'That which may be may not be'; and Christopher Baugh, who could sleep through most storms for as long as he chose, turned himself over and groaned. Mr. Carey remembered his bedfellow with a little compunction. He slipped out of bed and began to

dress. He left the room with his boots in his hand and Dr. Ross's treatise in his pocket.

The yard was not empty; a glimmer by the cowshed told him that one labourer had begun the day. By the light of the cowman's lanthorn he finished his toilet at the pump and saddled his horse. It was a crop-eared horse called Mutton, too little for his height and too slow for his inclinations; but it was enduring and a small eater, the two things that he had learnt to respect most in a lawyer's hack. He never saw it without mourning secretly for the mare he had sold three months before, who had already won as many races for her new owner; but he stifled these regrets seeing that he had neither the time nor the money for such recreations. He set off on Mutton, happy in escaping Madam Baugh, who would soon be in the yard like an active and a stirring housewife, her coats tucked up and her husband's oldest beaver tied on her head with a scarf.

II

The upland air was transparent, dark and cold; he plunged down the Mythe into a sea of fog. He was chilled to the bone and his hands were numb by the time that he reached the ferry across Severn. His heart was troubled; but he did not know whether it was with joy or sorrow. He was so much in love with Phillida that there was pain as well as pleasure in the thought of her; even now, when he believed that she was his, he had half a mind to turn his horse and leave her, as though by hard riding he could break his chains.

He broke through nothing but his foreboding thoughts; when the night mist shrank and fell away he had forgotten them. Cuckoos were calling in the meadows across Severn, with a chorus of blackbird, wren and chaffinch. As the climbing sun shot his arrows at the Malvern tops, Mr. Carey joined his voice to theirs. He sang the only song whose tune he knew :

> 'The noblest, brave profession
> That either is or hath been
> Is for to be a soldier true
> And there to live and die in.'

He sung it several times over with new words to suit his present condition. There was a great deal of half-remembered poetry in his mind about the Dawn, and Tithonus, and Apollo's chariot; but as he recalled to

himself the Latin verses, he applied them to another object, as though the clouds had worn their painted liveries, not in honour of the car of day, but for the triumph of his love.

The morning was Phillida's : the sky was her canopy, the shining dew a carpet spread for her, one tree had her grace and one her stately airs; yet the thorn was not as white as she, the cowslip not as sweet. Every fine thing in nature borrowed its perfections from her; but for her he would never have perceived them.

He was near her now, but he dared not visit her ; she had not given him leave to come again so early. So he went a mile or two out of his way to the top of a little hill from which he could look down on the roof of her father's parsonage. He saw the thatch and the chimney, and a thin plume of smoke that rose above the pear tree, and he knew that all was well there and guessed that it was baking day.

Till then he had ridden like a man in a dream, leaving Mutton to choose his own pace; now he spurred on to a gallop, whooping and shouting to startle the hares that sprang up from the fallows before him. But his discreet horse, who had no fancy for that kind of sport, presently stumbled and began to run lame, and Mr. Carey perceived that he must go more softly if he meant to reach Winchcombe that day; for Winchcombe was ten miles off on the far side of Severn. They had come to the lower slopes of Malvern, near the Holly Bush Pass, on a road which the carrier must infallibly use. Mr. Carey deter-

mined to wait for him there, repenting his heedlessness, and hoping that rest and fresh grass might cure Mutton, who liked those things very well. There was a cottage above him, emptied and ruined in the wars. Its roof was gone and its well choked with nettles, but it still had apple trees growing before it. They were in blossom, and he thought that they too were like Phillida. She herself, he knew, would care no more for their beauty than she did for her own; she did not at all regard the colours and the shapes of things, only such inward essences as she could distil into confections, or into wholesome compounds for the sick. She would wonder at him now because he had not ridden to Winchcombe and his duty; he was wasting the time which he should at least have spent upon some profitable study.

He remembered that he had a book with him and that no kind of knowledge came amiss to a lawyer. But he did not open his book. He sat half reclining on the broken wall, with the valley spread out before him. It sloped away from him, with its orchards, its cornfields, its green pastures, its great forest trees. He saw the long ridge of the Cotswolds, and Severn looping like a thread below it. He saw the Cathedral tower of Gloucester and picked out half a hundred village spires. May Hill was to the West, with all Wales behind it, and an airy shimmer marked the Bristol Channel. This was his world, and it was Phillida; it was as steadfast as she. Whether he went to London or to France, to Mexico or to great Babylon, it would be waiting for him when

he came home again. The sun, the moon and the stars sailed over it; they had been created to light it. If the Galileans held that it moved, that it hung on the whirling back of a planet, Mr. Carey perceived that their arguments were not worth a refutation. The air was cold with morning and hot with the sun. Breathing it he thought of the close courts and open sewers of Westminster to which, in two days, he must return. He did not dread them; that same nymph who, more than sweet airs and flowers, made his valley charming could make his Westminster blossom like a rose.

So he mused and rejoiced and sang other songs, with more good will than good music, till the sun rose so high that he perceived at last that it was too late to turn back to Winchcombe that morning. Besides, the wall gave him an uneasy resting place, and Love itself could no longer preserve him from the pangs of hunger. He had half resolved to ride on to Ledbury, to meet the carrier there and take his refreshment at an inn, when, looking up the road, he saw a horseman he knew well picking his way among the ruts and old watercourses. It was Roger Baugh, coming home from the siege of his lady. Mr. Carey hailed him, and was answered with more amazement than pleasure.

'Dick Carey? 'Tis never Dick Carey.'

'Dost thou take me for a spirit?'

'I was told—I thought—thou hadst been at Winchcombe with Kit.'

'Kit must shift for himself. I study astronomy.' Mr.

Carey pulled out his treatise and Mr. Baugh shied at it. He did not love books and that book did not deceive him; he knew as well as his neighbours what had kept Richard from Winchcombe. With them he mourned that a hopeful gentleman, who would get his rights if the King came home and might choose among the best in the land, should go for a wife to so poor a parish and to the parson's daughter there. Not a Church and King parson neither, but a canting, hypocritical rogue without a whole gown to put on his back ; and with little enough for his belly, except what his daughter, for all her fine airs, could squeeze from Sir William Constable's lady. 'A beggarly madam', the Ledbury widow had called Richard's goddess; and Roger, only the night before, over a can of spiced ale, had marvelled with her that such a creature could set herself up with her mincing talk, when the whole country knew she had been bred at Highnam out of pure charity; and ill enough had she paid for the kindness.

Mr. Baugh knew too much of the world to tell Richard this. He sat on his horse and said nothing; and Mr. Carey remarked, for the twentieth time, how like he was to Kit with the wit left out. 'They have the same height and girth. They have each a snub nose in a broad face. One is a man, the other—Lord help us!' He said the prayer aloud, and Roger stuttered 'Amen'.

His 'Amen' was echoed by a ragged pedlar, who, with his donkey, had stolen upon them unawares. Mr. Baugh turned his round eyes from Richard to the pedlar and

from the pedlar back to Richard, clutching at his reins as though he would have made off at a gallop. Mr. Carey could have found diversion in his clownish and surprising terrors; but he remembered that this thing might furnish him with breakfast, and (more nobly) that it was so near akin to Christopher. He soothed it with sweet words. 'Good Roger,' said he, 'I shall be a spirit indeed without your help. I know you are too wise a man to travel without provisions, and I think you carry something for your friends.'

Mr. Baugh had a bag hanging from his saddle. He opened it delicately, keeping his body between it and the pedlar, who stood humbly a little way off as though he hoped that a few crumbs might fall to his share. From his bag Mr. Baugh took a turnover pie; and, as Mr. Carey still waited, three more, each flaky and crisp like the one before it. With each pie some of his awkwardness left him. The fifth he looked at twice and put back again. 'It is my last,' said he. 'If I give thee all, I shall be a spirit myself. They are good pies with good mutton in them from a good ewe. She had two lambs last March. We ate one at the widow's—I don't rightly remember which day it was. She fell down the quarry come Tuesday sen'night. The foxes ate part of her, but the boys drove them off; so part was saved, and the best part too.'

Mr. Carey laughed. 'Good pies and good pastry. Your Madam has a fine pastry hand. It would be a pleasure to drink her health.'

'She's a fine, hearty woman; and drink to her you shall. I've some fine cider here that was drawn this morning. But you'd best come home with me, Dick. When Rogues are about, honest men travel in pairs.' He winked and nodded like a man who could say more if he pleased, jerking head and thumb to show that his chief rogue was the pedlar. Mr. Carey's kindness, warmed by hospitality, was chilled again because this burly farmer rode in dread of a little crooked man. He replied that he must wait for the carrier.

Mr. Baugh thought he would wait long enough; the carrier would be late, for his wife was sick. Mr. Carey would do best to come home at once.

Mr. Carey thanked him heartily for his good victuals and his good advice; he would stay where he was to eat his breakfast and drink to the widow.

Mr. Baugh was troubled. 'You're welcome, Dick. But you had best come now, you had truly. Kit would say the same, he truly would.'

Mr. Carey, smiling, refused; he set his pies in a row on the grass. Roger watched him sadly. He knew that he was not eloquent, he was no match for his brother's friend. Besides he held Richard in no little awe. He was himself a careful, warm, housekeeping man, not at all a Malignant; but it was in his nature to be dazzled by a High Cavalier who had fought in battles, read Latin and perhaps could speak it, kept company where he pleased and, for all his poverty, wore finer clothes than any that the Baughs aspired to. If Roger Baugh called

him 'Dick' he did it vaingloriously, as a humble man might wear the Garter. He knew his place.

He ventured on no further argument but, sighing once or twice, picked up his reins again and bade Mr. Carey good day.

He did not ride without some backward glances. At the next corner he turned in the saddle and saw the pedlar sit down on the grass beside his fine gentleman. Mr. Carey reached out the bottle and the pedlar took a long draught. Mr. Baugh, seeing this, pursed up his lips and nodded, like a man whose expectations are fulfilled. With a solemn air he went upon his way.

III

'He is Elijah,' said the pedlar. 'The ravens feed him.'

Mr. Carey scowled and said nothing; the pedlar helped himself. He was a crooked man though without any certain deformity; his dress, mean and ill-shaped, made him seem more crooked still. His face was thin and too large for his body, yet beautiful, the temple of a spirit. It was grimed with dirt and one eye was covered by a patch. The other, out of which the spirit looked, was large, light, and as green as glass. With that eye upon him, Mr. Carey lost his air of fashion and the world.

The pedlar took a pull at the bottle, finished his second pie and cast envious glances at a third. Mr. Carey remembered that he too was hungry; he reached across and secured it for himself. The pedlar watched him without affection. 'I commend you, Richard,' said he. 'You choose your friends well.'

'They are good friends,' said Richard.

'You had good friends before, I think.'

Mr. Carey thought of the friends he had had before, and chiefly of Sir George Lisle, his old commander, who, with Lucas, was shot by General Ireton's order after the army had surrendered. That murder, since he had made his peace with Ireton's party, was a thing which he did not willingly remember. The pedlar continued, 'You are wise, Richard, in your generation. The Mam-

mon of Unrighteousness—no, of Righteousness. I beg the gentleman's pardon.'

'The Devil quotes Scripture,' said Richard.

'I am a meek man,' said the pedlar. 'I speak to every one according to his opinion. I have heard that Richard Carey is of the Godly party. Is it true?'

'It is a lie. But I have taken the Negative Oath. I cannot bear arms against them.'

'You are right to be so scrupulous. It is a pity—for them—that all men are not so scrupulous.'

'It is a pity for us all,' said Richard. 'If the King's son should come into this country——'

'Your father would have called him the King.'

It was on the tip of Richard's tongue to tell the pedlar what his father would have called a king who had taken the Covenant and had repented publicly of his parents' sins to satisfy their enemies. But he could not speak of that business; besides, he was not sure what his father would have thought. Would he have allowed himself to think of it? 'Kit's doing,' he told himself. 'I did not think until I met with him again.'

Remembering Kit he was silent, flicking twigs at the well head, while the pedlar finished his cider. Then he returned to his argument. 'If the King comes into this country, we shall have war again; and war and more war until there is no England left to fight for. The sign is there.' He jerked his head to the black, staring walls of the cottage, and thought of Phillida's small house, defenceless in the valley.

'Here is another,' said the pedlar. He kicked a piece of rusty iron out of the nettles by the ditch. It was a broken stirrup. 'That was lost in the skirmish when Backhouse was killed. Massey stopped here to breathe his horses. They had a running fight from Ledbury, four miles down the road, with Rupert hard upon them. I was there, I do not forget it.'

Mr. Carey knew other men who had been in that skirmish. A sharp passion for fighting rose in him, a perfect hatred of the Law. He said, with all the insolence he could command, 'You were not then with the Prince, I think.'

'No,' said the pedlar. 'I have not the trick to be upon the winning side.'

'I have not that trick myself, but I cannot help you. I have taken the oath.'

'You have sworn not to bear arms against them. I do not bear arms against them.'

Richard got up full of rage and pain. He loathed the business to which this man called him, yet though he did not mean to be converted to it, he knew in his heart that it was fitter for his father's son than to live, as he did now, like those summer birds who in bad times lie hidden in their hollow trees. He would have given all that he had in the world to fall upon his tormentor, but, being so much the stronger, he could not honourably attempt it. He went and stood over the fellow. 'It is time for you to go,' said he.

The pedlar jumped up and ran to his donkey. 'We are

spies, my dear,' he told it, as he tightened the girths. 'Mr. Carey is not a spy. He hath clean hands and a pure heart; he shall ascend unto the holy hill. And the Daughter of Zion shall be there with a gift—it is Sidon in the text; but the daughters of Sidon are not Godly. Mr. Carey, one moment; your favour.'

'In what?'

'I do not ask a subsidy for Young Tarquin' ('Tarquin' was a nickname for the King), 'only a small loan for an old comrade out of Colchester.'

Mr. Carey gave his old comrade what money he had in his pockets, a crown, three half crowns and a fourpenny piece. The pedlar gave him in return a bit of worked silver about the size of the crown but not so thick.

'What's this?' said Richard.

'Something to show for your money; I do not intend to be whipped through Tewkesbury for begging. If the daughters of Zion grow cold, Tarquin will have thee again. A gentle heart has Tarquin; there is no pride in it.'

He beat the donkey, which set off too fast. He ran after it, swearing. Mr. Carey watched them out of sight before he remembered the disk in his hand. He judged that it might have been torn from the cover of some old religious book. There were figures upon it in relievo: a man asleep with a woman cutting off his hair. They were Samson and Delilah.

He flung it into the ditch.

But though he threw that image from his hand, he could not throw it from his heart, even when he remembered the baseness of the person who had set it there. He knew that this feigned pedlar, though bred at the Court and grafted from a fair stock, was by his nature lower than his pretended calling. As he had come into the war at the beginning to mend a decayed estate, so he had afterwards joined the King's party for the hope of revenge and of private gain, for he was that Accepted Harrison who was drummed out of Captain Purefoy's Company for his evil life. If he never was upon the winning side, it was for want, not of study, but of virtue enough to make a common hypocrite. As the Devil is known by his hoof, so was this man betrayed by a word, a shrug, the glance of an eye. He was subtle enough to govern the world, but he could not govern his own heart, so that often the work of a month was overthrown in an hour; and his subtlety (like the serpent's in Eden), while it destroyed others, to himself only brought shame.

As Mr. Carey was young and vain he could not be armed, even by this knowledge, against the shafts of deliberate malice. The vileness of his accuser made his own case the worse; he saw that he had fallen low indeed to be despised by Harrison. To drive these thoughts away he had only his treatise, where, out of the principles of Divinity, Philosophy, Astronomy, Reason and Sense, the Earth's immobility is asserted and Copernicus his Opinion, as erroneous, ridiculous and impious, is fully refuted. He read with a kind of fury, beginning at that

chapter in which Dr. Ross shows that an eighth planet, if it could exist, would destroy the harmony of the spheres. Where he found the reasoning weak he reinforced it with his good will, for, as the earth was Phillida, the Galileans with their doubts and fleers were become so many Harrisons.

He was growing hungry again, and the shadows had changed their direction, when the carrier came by at last with his string of pack-horses. He knew Mr. Carey and gave him his letter. When the wax was broken (it was stamped with the top of a thimble, for Phillida had no seal of her own), this proved a long letter, very neatly written.

'Good Mr. Carey,' wrote Phillida. 'You know, Richard, for I have told you often, that I will never marry without my friends approve it. The promises which we made to each other as little children we neither can nor ought to be bound by, for we were not of an age to dispose of ourselves and our fathers did not consent to them. Dear Richard, I have laid these things before the Lord and I know that that play, when we called you Husband and me Wife, should have a worse name than folly. For besides that my Lady your Aunt forbade us those names, we mocked (though ignorantly) at an holy estate. I know that you would have me now truly for your wife, but how can that thing be good which had its root in childish disobedience? We see that it is not, since you love me for my outward seeming, which is carnal affection and not blessed. Scripture says that the man should be the head of the woman as Christ is the Head of His Church; but how shall I make you my head when I know that your heart is not set upon the things of God? I have heard you well, Richard Carey; in the things of the

kingdom you are still a child. As to what you say of the unbelieving husband and the believing wife, since God has not laid this burden upon me I dare not take it on myself, for I think that it would prove too heavy for me and we should go down to the Pit together. I have not Grace enough for us both; if you will not seek it for yourself, I cannot help you to it.

'By the reckoning of the world I am not fit for you, who must look to get a larger fortune than any I could bring to a husband. If you cannot perceive this for yourself, your friends will make you aware of it. Indeed they are right, not for vanity alone, but for the sake of prudence, since you do not order your affairs with that exact economy that becomes a lean purse.

'I tell you this, which cannot be news to you (for I think that I have said it all before at one time or another), because I would not have you reproach me with inconstancy. I must tell you something more. I am soon to be married to that Colonel Godwin whom I saw in Gloucester when I lodged there with Sir William's Lady. He is a very wise, grave and discreet gentleman, a Parliament Man and a famous soldier, who would have a great command in the army, but he lost it when the other members gave up theirs. He was a near friend of Governor Massey, but though he is as good a Presbyterian he has not joined the Scotch King, he is true to the Commonwealth by Law appointed. I suppose that you will not like him the better for his principles; but I do, for you know that they are mine. Sir William Constable and his Lady, who have shown me so much kindness, like the match. It is an honour for me to be sought by such a person. I remember when I was still a girl, I saw him riding in the streets after the siege was raised.

'You cannot say that I have deceived you, for I tell you this news among the first. When you have considered it you will see that it is good and will wish me well, as I wish you. I think there is nobody can more heartily wish you well in this world

and (what I take to be the more material) in the next, than P. Wilcox.'

Mr. Carey read this letter through two or three times and sat staring at the apple petals on the grass and the old stirrup iron. He remembered that tale of a skirmish, and his friends who had been with Rupert, and how one was dead and another in exile. He had left them for Phillida, and just was his reward. He repented with his whole heart and resolved to amend his life.

IV

On the 25th of August following, Mr. Carey was seen in Gloucester. A cobbler saw him, a busy, idle workman that read the news-sheets oftener than his Bible. He saw that evening a tall man muffled in a cloak, with a montero cap pulled over his eyes, who stood in the drip of the eaves knocking at a door. There was a particularity in the knocking and the house was suspect. It belonged to a notorious cavalier who had been driven out before the siege. With other houses in that quarter it had been partly destroyed by the King's artillery, and though at first some poor families had taken refuge there, the wind and the wet together had so decayed it, coming in at the breaches which the cannon had made, that it was fit for nothing now but for rats or for vagabonds who could find no other shelter. A door it had still, for that was clamped and hinged so well that it was worth nobody's while to break it for firewood. This door was opened and, after some whispering, the muffled man went in.

He who opened the door was the same crooked fellow who had carried a pedlar's pack the day that Mr. Carey went to fetch his letter. 'Damme, Richard,' said he. 'Why can't you knock like a Christian? That's the way with young fools; give them a pass sign and they use it, in and out of season.'

'I have a message for you.'

'I knew as much; so did Moll Pie opposite and the chairmender round the corner. Give it to me now, before we are arrested for conspiracy.'

'I cannot give it to you here.'

The other shut the door and bolted it, then turning led the way down a foul, dark stair. They groped to the light of a stinking, tallow candle which showed them a cellar with a window high up, and a woman's scarf and petticoat hung across the shutter. There was nothing else there but two stools, a straw bed without sheets or curtains, a brazier full of ashes, and a shelf that held some pots and the candle. The air was close and cold; a stream of rainwater, which soaked through the wall at the level of the street, trickled to the floor and made a pool at one side of it. Harrison stopped and looked about him. 'I have lain in this room for a month,' said he. 'This is the King's service. I have often wondered what reward will be left us at the end of it.'

'Can you find no other lodging?'

'I am known, and his Majesty gives me neither money nor credit. I hope that you bring me both; his affairs will not prosper without them.'

Mr. Carey took off his hat and cloak and laid them on the bed. It was sodden, and he saw that Harrison had lied; he was too clean and dry to have been long in such a place. The lie did not disquiet him, it was so transparent that he thought it came from petulance and not from design. He passed it; he knew that many who were working together that year loved each other no better

than he loved this fellow. For the Puritans, having crushed the old Royalist Party, were split into two factions, the Presbyterian and the Independent. In England, the Presbyterian House of Commons that ruled the country in name was itself ruled by an Independent Army, though there were many good Parliament men to whom an Independent Preacher was as bad as a Bishop, and the military yoke no lighter than the royal. In Scotland, where that faction was stronger (the Army there being Presbyterian), it had called in a tame young King, who, having been defeated there by Cromwell and the English Independent Army, had slipped into England with his new friends to get help from the Loyal Remnant and from the English Presbyterians. Thus King Charles was at Worcester with the same Scots Army which had sold his father and hanged Montrose; and Massey, the old Presbyterian governor, was a Major-General in that army. He was still so much beloved in Gloucester that, as he had held it against Charles I, he might yet restore it to Charles II. As his agent Richard had come to the city where Accepted Harrison was a general agent for the King's party.

He had papers with him; he took a knife and cut the thread which sewed them to his shirt. When he had delivered them he sat down by the brasier, raking the ashes to get a little warmth. He himself was neither clean nor dry; he had ridden too far through the clays.

Harrison ran through the papers with impatient oaths; some were in cipher and the light was not good.

He was not satisfied when he had made them out. 'Where is the money?' said he.

'You have bills payable——'

'By men too wise to pay them. Why did these come so late? You have been in Worcester long enough.'

'They had riders out to catch our people, both at the post stages and between them. They have stopped many. I myself was taken yesterday and my pocket searched. I spent the night with an old budge constable. I gave his wife my last guinea to let me go this morning, and came here at last upon the tail of the Hereford Militia.'

'You might have saved your guinea; you bring me nothing. Here's a man named that was pressed for Ireland in the spring. Here's another that has been three months in gaol. Here's a proclamation: will you proclaim it? I will not. Sir William Constable may, if we ask him. I think your Massey did not take his wits to Court.'

"All the persons named are not in gaol. I think the principals are not.'

'What have you for them? Promises? What promises?'

'What is material is not expressed in writing. You have my credentials, you know the persons to whom I must apply. Your part is to bring me to them.'

'What will you do with them? These are not broken cavaliers. These are weighty men, discreet, religious men, merchants with fortunes to lose in this business. If you were sent to ladies you might treat with them.'

'I think there are no ladies expressed in this paper.'

'It is the more extraordinary that Massey pitched on you. Dick, did he pitch on you? What could he confide to you?'

'More than I may confide to you. Good Mr. Harrison, do your part and I will do mine.'

'By God, Richard, I did not think this of you. 'Tis an upstart apprentice, not your father's son. We dress you in a little brief authority and you hazard the Cause before you let it go. I am the King's agent here; I know these men. If for a private grudge you will not trust me now there can be nothing but confusion.'

'Let these discreet men tell you what they may intend, but they must hear me first.'

'Hear you? You come too late. You come with the Militia. How can a city rise which is the general rendezvous? They have raised five companies here, repaired the drawbridges, collected all the arms which were in private hands. I trust you brought your shovel and your little basket.'

'My shovel and my basket?'

'To repair the fortifications. Those that are not enlisted, as I suppose you are not, must go and dig trenches at six to-morrow morning. If you stay we shall have the constables upon us.'

'Will you go?'

'I am excused, dear Dick. I am a widow.' He cast his eyes up at the petticoat dangling on the wall. Richard could not tell what he must believe. He was weary of this levity and malice and hoped for better information at an

inn. He took up his cap and, even as he did so, there was a stir in the street and a great noise of hammering at the door. The two men looked at each other. 'This is your doing,' said Harrison. 'This is Moll Pie and the chair-mender. Your damned precautions have brought the watch upon us.'

Mr. Carey went to take up the papers, but the other prevented him. 'I will have those. You must go up, for I cannot. I am known. Tell them that I am a widow and that you are my son. Keep them for as long as you can.'

'Is there no way out? No back way?'

'The passage has fallen. There is only this room.'

Mr. Carey went up to the door. A light shone under it and voices cried out to open in the Parliament's name.

He stood and considered what he should do. His pistol was in the cellar, but if his honour had allowed him to use it, he dared not, by a vain resistance, spoil Harrison's plan. The passage behind him was blocked with beams and stones; he went to feel them and found that that story was true. He might go out into the street, to entertain the crowd with some other story, but he did not think that he could hold them; he trusted more to good oak and iron. He concluded that it would be better for him to wait till they had forced a way in, and then to feign deafness.

He leant against the wall, out of the way of splinters, and heard their cries and trampling. He heard some say, 'The Papists!' and some, 'Burn them out!' He heard

them call for gunpowder; but none was brought. Only a beam, like a battering-ram, was launched against the planks, so that the whole door trembled and the wood began to crack. One plank at last was split and the light streamed in. He saw steel caps and accoutrements glitter through the hole and was glad, for he knew now there were soldiers without. He did not fear these, but he did dread the fury of the mob.

The ram had been directed against the wood and did little harm there, for the iron still held. The officers understood this ; he heard them exhort their men to strike at the scroll work near the hinges. Here they had better success, for the staples, which were rusted by the damp of the walls, gave way at last and the door fell back.

The men fell back on their side, expecting some desperate encounter. They were of a city company, young soldiers, lately raised, and had all heard tales of armed Papists who swarmed in such houses as these and would come out one night to fire the city. They clutched at their weapons and stood ready as at the mouth of a lion's den. But there only came out a lanky youth, with his coat on his arm, who blinked at the torches and said, in a countryman's voice, ' Good people, you have woken my mother.'

In the roar of laughter that answered him he was swept back into the cellar.

He had thought to find Harrison dressed as a woman, but when he could see him again (which was not at once, the place being very full), he perceived that he still wore

the same black suit, only disposed more neatly. He had smoothed his hair, which was so pale that it looked then like silver. He stood with the light of his candle falling upon it and talked high and disposedly to the ensign sent to arrest him. Their words were lost in the shuffling of feet, but over the heads in front of him Richard could see Mr. Harrison take up a pistol and, with all the state in the world, deliver it to that ensign, who received it with visible awe. He was a draper by trade and had his own shop in Westgate Street; but through reading old chivalric books he had learnt how such actions should be performed.

The pistol was Mr. Carey's, but he could not have given it up so handsomely. His heart was heavy within him; he had heard by now of the muffled man who was seen by a cobbler whose nephew was in Captain Pury's troop. He knew that his own carelessness had spoilt their plans. He was dragged at the tail of the party, his hands tied together and a musket butt in his ribs if he stumbled. He did not protest against these indignities; he would rather endure them than face Harrison's tongue. One touch of comfort he had before he left the cellar: he saw in the brasier some scraps of burnt paper with smoke rising from them.

V

RICHARD CAREY was tried at the Tolsey for his share in the damnable project for delivering Gloucester to the Scots.

The trial was martial, the city companies who had taken him being jealous of their military prerogative. The new Governor, Sir William Constable, and Mr. Edwards, the Mayor, were counting out their barrels of gunpowder and casks of strong ale for the Parliament Army, with one especial cask for their darling Cromwell's own drinking; the Deputy Governor, Major John Wade, presided in the court. With him were some Militia captains, citizens of repute, as Godfrey Ellis, Thomas Pury, and that same Captain Mr. Alderman Wise who had been Mayor in the siege and had commanded the stout and famous regiment which brought in the Welsh army prisoners from Highnam. There were besides some civilians who pretended to no military employment, with a few strangers: amongst these Colonel Godwin, friend of Constable and Massey. He had his command again, and should then have been near Worcester with General Lambert; but it happened, as he directed some halliers at the breast-work on the quay, that a falling stone had crushed his leg, so that he was not capable of riding on that service, but had been left behind in Gloucester as the right hand of the Governor.

Mr. Christopher Baugh had come in to give testimony.

He carried his arm in a sling, for he had volunteered under Lambert and was hurt in the skirmish at Upton Bridge. He was examined upon his knowledge of Mr. Carey's way of life.

He had known Richard Carey for a long while; they had been at the college school together. Yes, Mr. Carey's family had held to the Court interest—the father was killed at Naseby—many gentlemen had, unhappily, believed that their consciences obliged them to support that party. 'Inherent Malignancy?' It was a hard saying. No, he had heard Mr. Carey express himself very sensibly upon the duty of submitting to the present government. Yes, Mr. Carey had carried arms against the Government in the insurrection of '48. Many gentlemen had, unhappily, taken part in that insurrection. Yes, Richard Carey had received his indemnity—he had been admitted to a composition—he had paid his fine. No, he had conducted himself peaceably since. He had been admitted to the Inner Temple and was studying there. The deponent also was studying there. He had shared a lodging with Mr. Carey. No, Mr. Carey had conducted himself very soberly. No, Mr. Carey had another lodging at present. Yes, the deponent saw Mr. Carey often. No, not every day, but often. No, he had never heard of Mr. Carey's going to France. He could not say. He could not swear that Mr. Carey had not been to France; but he thought, if it were true, he should have heard of it.

Had Mr. Baugh seen Mr. Carey in the company of a small lame man with green eyes?

Mr. Baugh did not remember such a person, but Mr. Dorney, the Town Clerk, who was also clerk to the Militia Committee, had something to say of him; for this lame man was *nequissimus*, a son of Belial, whose father after the flesh had been a chosen vessel, but he himself had fallen away. Born to a fair estate in Suffolk, he had *turpissime* wasted his substance and, being drummed out of Captain Purefoy's Company *pro vitiis suis*, had through revenge and malice joined himself to the Malignant Party. He had travelled as a pedlar and in other vain dresses, through Worcestershire and other counties, inciting the vulgar to tumults. And he had certainly stirred up that sedition in Captain Pury's Company whereby the City of Gloucester had been endangered in the spring. He had been taken in the same house with Richard Carey, but *per casus nefandos* he had escaped, privily departed *a carcere*, evaded this court and betaken himself to a hiding-place.

There was more Latin; Mr. Baugh thought one that used so much Latin never need relieve himself with oaths. He remembered now and confessed it, that he had seen such a pedlar on the bowling green of the Cock Tavern, close to Lincoln's Inn, where he sometimes went with Mr. Carey for his refreshment. He had not heard Mr. Carey speak to the pedlar. He had not heard the pedlar speak to Mr. Carey. He never had seen any sign pass between them.

Mr. Roger Baugh was examined. With many men able to bear their own charges, he had enrolled himself in the Mayor's company. His buff coat sat awkwardly upon him: his face, under an iron pot, was as round as the moon.

He did not come by choice; he had been called. Mr. Pury's clerk had a brother whose wife was third cousin to a widow at Ledbury who had told a story of Roger's concerning Mr. Richard Carey. Roger knew that and it troubled him. He was troubled, besides, at speaking before so many and such honourable strangers. Mr. Dorney's horn spectacles gave him no help, nor the sour looks of the president, nor Captain Alderman Wise with his red face and white hair, nor Colonel Godwin in a scarlet cloak laced with gold, his leg on a stool and his eyes on the rain which streamed down the new sashed windows. From Richard he got no help. The honest man who kept his prison had furnished Mr. Carey with clean linen; but his dress was coarser and plainer than any he had worn before, and his hair was cut short like a mechanic's. His face had changed, too; though it was a boy's face still, the colour had gone out of it, and it was both leaner and heavier than it had been a few months before. He did not look at all at Roger, whom he used to greet with kindness, but only at the table where lay certain papers—a proclamation and so forth, which had been read before he was brought in. He was no more Dick Carey than the staircase up which they had climbed to the Council Room was the nave of All Saints' church. Roger had heard that part of the nave was swallowed up in the new staircase when the Tolsey was enlarged; but he had seen the church when he was a boy and had never been up the staircase before, so that the very floor on which he stood seemed unnatural to him.

He had known Mr. Carey for three years come

Christmas (so called). He had never heard any ill of him. A Rebel? It was very like. The whole country knew that his father had held to the King; but an honester and a sweeter spoken gentleman—Mr. Baugh a rebel? No, no. He was for Parliament. Their worships knew that all the Baughs were for Parliament. There were Baughs in Gloucester time out of mind. Their worships knew there was once a Baugh mayor. There were some living now who had seen him.

Mr. Baugh wiped his face. He looked piteously at Kit, who nodded to him, and at Richard, who stood like his own ghost between two soldiers. The clouds hung so low over the city that, for all its great windows, the room was very dark, and this darkness filled Roger with superstitious dread. He was in an agony. He felt the eyes of the whole court upon him, and he did not desire at all to put his own neck in danger. Besides, he was for the Commonwealth; he had left his farm for it and had enrolled himself in its defence. He hated the Scots, for he had heard tales of them and knew that they were born thieves, and he was mortally afraid of the Papists. He was ready to see them all hanged, Scots and Papists together, more particularly since they had hurt Kit; but he was not ready to hang Mr. Carey. If Mr. Carey was a Church and King man, that was his right. If he had plotted to bring the Scots and the Papists into Gloucester, that was his right too. Richard Carey was his father's son, a High Cavalier. That Mr. Carey should be hanged for exercising his rights seemed to Mr. Baugh a piece of high treason, like in kind to that horrid murder of his late

Sacred Majesty, over which Roger still shuddered when he woke at nights, wondering what judgments God had reserved for a rebellious people. It seemed, too, a slur upon the Baugh family, which counted Mr. Carey's friendship among its chief glories. Indeed, Roger Baugh truly loved Richard Carey and was grieved to see him in trouble, let alone to plunge him deeper into it. For all his fears, his awkwardness, and his confusion of mind, he had a certain country shrewdness which was very much at Richard's service.

A pedlar? He had seen Mr. Carey talking with a pedlar, a many times had he seen him. What should he want with a pedlar? Why, there were laces and pins and such like fal-lals—and books too, he being a book-learned man. Their worships knew there was a many things to be had from pedlars. A lame pedlar? He had seen Mr. Carey speak with a lame pedlar in Tewkesbury market. And again, on the Mythe Hill, he had seen him stop that same pedlar for a ballad. A green eye? Mr. Baugh kept no count of a pedlar's eye, leastways not of a man pedlar's eye. Had that pedlar come again to Tewkesbury? A many times had he come there. The pedlar a Papist? No one had called him so in Mr. Baugh's hearing. A Malignant? No one had called him so. A Parliament man? Mr. Baugh could not say. What had poor men to do with such things; it was enough for them if they could get their livings. Indeed, Mr. Baugh had heard that he was a poor, honest Protestant. His name? It was Natty Wegg. Their worships did not know him perhaps; but the people of Tewkesbury knew him well. He was

born in the town and had died there, good man, this October twelve month. His mother had been a servant at the 'Bear'; she had served some of their worships, perhaps, if ever they had ridden that way.

If their worships had an appetite for pedlars, Mr. Baugh could feed it to satiety. When he was used to the sound of his own voice he grew bolder; the strings of his tongue were unloosed. He remembered tall pedlars and short pedlars, lame, hunch-backed and blind pedlars, pedlars who had spoken with Mr. Carey, and pedlars who had died before Mr. Carey was born.

In this spate of pedlars the court was swept off its feet. These strollers who dealt in ribbons and ballads and fal-lals, who ate in taverns and slept under hedges, who corrupted the people by the example of their dishonest lives, were they not all children of Belial? Were they not all, *natura rerum*, allies of Charles Stuart? Before the eyes of Mr. Dorney, that formal man, and of the citizens his colleagues, was stretched the shadow of a mighty web. They saw the pedlars of England linked together in one vast conspiracy.

Only Colonel Godwin was not seduced by this phantom. He turned his square, comely face from the window and fixed his steady gaze on Mr. Baugh. Though Roger might declare that he kept no count of a man's eyes, he could not but remark upon the Colonel's. They were set in that ruddy face like two jewels, blue jewels, as blue as those pieces of blue glass from one of the windows in the cathedral, which Kit had saved for a long while as

a trophy. Mr. Baugh's assurance left him, his mind was full of confused thoughts, his knees began to tremble under him.

What pedlar was it, the Colonel enquired, whom he had seen with Mr. Carey at Holly Bush on Malvern upon the second Tuesday of May last? Mr. Baugh was wholly confounded. He perceived that Colonel Godwin had heard the widow's story and knew as much of the matter as he did himself.

That was no more than his having seen Mr. Carey drink out of the same bottle with a crooked fellow whom a Ledbury ostler had pointed out to him as a Malignant spy. It was little; but it was enough. Many of those present remembered that Mr. Carey the elder had put an affront upon the city, not concealing his opinion that its magistrates were unworthy to sit down with a person of his quality. That the son of such a man could drink with a pedlar argued at least some treasonable correspondency between them. It was proved beyond doubt that Mr. Carey had not come by accident into that cellar from which Harrison and his papers were taken.

Harrison had fled, and Mr. Carey would not speak; but the papers were there, and they spoke loudly enough; there was such matter in them as might have hanged twenty gentlemen as good as old Carey's son. Hanged he should be. Wickedly, against his sworn oath, he had wrought against the Commonwealth. Wickedly he had attempted to betray Gloucester city. The sentence of the court was Death by Hanging.

VI

MR. CAREY could not hear this sentence without dismay. Death he had expected; the miscarriage of this plot was the first public disaster he had known which he could attribute to his own negligence, and he was still so young a politician that he believed death to be the one seemly end to his adventure. But he had proposed to himself an honourable death, as by shooting.

He had done nothing to avert it during his trial, and, indeed, if he had wished to save himself, he must have suffered from the greatest embarrassment. The papers which had been taken from Harrison lay together in a pile with the Proclamation on the top. What lay under it he could not tell, but remembering the ashes in the brasier he supposed that some things must have been destroyed. Thus he dared not open his mouth, lest by an unwary answer he might betray more than was known already. While the witnesses were speaking, he had stood like a man with a dumb devil, not concerning himself with their testimony, or much regarding his judges; except Colonel Godwin, whose gay cloak he remarked with a crooked kind of pleasure as the bait that had caught sober Phillida.

Only when they accused him of breaking his oath was he moved to defend himself. This charge seemed to him wholly unjust; for though the oath commonly exacted

from those Cavaliers who were admitted to a composition had a clause which provided that they should neither directly nor indirectly adhere to the enemies of Parliament, nor willingly assist them, he himself had never sworn that oath. He knew very well that he had escaped it only by an accident, through the negligence of the commissioners, but he thought it his duty to give the King the benefit of that accident. The oath which he had taken—not to bear arms against the Commonwealth forces—he had most scrupulously observed; for, though he had brought a pistol into Gloucester, he had not carried it to use it against the Parliament's officers, but only to defend himself from such plunderers and highwaymen as then infested the roads. Secure in his own integrity, he was astonished now to find that other men could doubt of it.

Indeed, his spirit was less well armed against misfortune than he had supposed it to be; his study of the Philosophers had not made him one of them; and when he heard himself condemned to a disgraceful death, for a crime that he abhorred, he was immediately afflicted with rage, grief and something more like terror than he had felt before.

Expecting death, he had not felt its bitterness. He tasted it on his way to the Northgate prison. A few young apprentices, leaning over the balustrade on the roof of the Tolsey, pelted him with apple cores as he was led out into the street; and a rabble of children ran after him for a few steps, calling him 'Papist' and other ill names. A woman in a blue cloak cried out 'God help him!', and

a crack-brained fanatic spat at him, bidding his fellows take note that here was the first-fruits of that Scots army whom they should yet see led prisoners through Gloucester, roped two and two together like the Welsh army that had encamped against them at Highnam eight years before. But, for the most part, the people did not heed him. The storm was over, and there was a great press of women carrying baskets of bread and meat to the men working on the walls; the soldiers had some ado to force a way through them. They did not look at Richard, but at the dark cloud that still hung over their city like a visible sign of God's displeasure against it.

From the western edge of that cloud long rays of sunlight shot among the roofs; the swallows, flying low between the houses, flashed across them like jewels. Mr. Carey had seen their flight before, but he had never truly marked it. He marked it now; and the beauty of the women, with their smooth hair parted under snowy caps; and their voices, like the chatter of birds in an orchard, but not so shrill; and the raindrops that still hung like diamonds from shop signs and gables. The signs and gables he knew well, for he had often loitered in that street when he was a boy, but there was not a creature in it now that knew him; the woman who had pitied him was a stranger and the rest beheld in him a common enemy. If they did not stop to curse him, that was because they saw him as one already dead. And he was alive, and as much in love with life as he had ever been before.

They led him past the guard house and the Cross

near the wheat market where the four great roads met Here was the Governor's coach, with his lady in it. Her grandchildren had alighted from it, with another lady, to buy apples from one of the country women whose wares were spread on the steps of the Cross.

Richard saw Phillida standing on the steps. The gutter ran with jewels at her feet, the trailing drops of a shower fell on her like Danaë's gold. But she was a finer thing than Danaë; she stood above the children and the market women like a Popish saint in glory.

Richard, who walked in Hell, saw the face that was his Heaven. For all his secret anguish he had borne himself so steadily and had seemed so little concerned by the danger in which he stood that some, even of his judges, had been troubled, perceiving that he was not fit to die. Now a kind of madness fell upon him, for indeed he was not fit to die; he saw death, not as the gate of Life, but as a dark and silent tomb, and he desired, above all things, to carry there some echo of her voice. He flung himself across his guards and ran to her, holding out his hands, calling her by name.

Phillida Godwin looked down at him. She saw the man who would have betrayed her city to the Scots; her city, and her husband, and her cause. Without anger, but sadly and coldly, she looked and turned away.

VII

MR. CAREY was not hanged that day, for Christopher Baugh, with Mr. Thomas Pury the younger, a gentleman always inclinable to mercy, obtained a respite for him that certain pious divines might endeavour to convince him of sin.

Visiting him the day after the trial, Mr. Baugh implored him to hear them with patience. That he readily promised to do. He could not repent of his crime against the State, for he said he had done there no more than his duty; but he did repent of any offences that he had committed against particular persons. He bore no malice against his judges. He talked very kindly of Roger, who had testified against him, and asked for news of the Twyning servants who had been at Upton Bridge. He expressed concern at his friend's hurt, but none at his own approaching end, declaring that at such a time, when hundreds perished daily, one man's life was of little account; for his part he could as soon die young as live to grow old, which he thought might be held the greater evil. As for hanging, that did not trouble him at all; he had heard tell that it was an easy death.

They talked without rancour of the great battle that was expected between the two armies, and parted with kindness, but without any of those arguments and pleasant contentions that had nourished their friendship till that day. Christopher Baugh, who loved Richard as his

own soul, went away more sorrowful than he had come.

When his days of grace were over Mr. Carey still lived. He had been taken on the twenty-fifth of August; on the third of September the Scots army at Worcester was utterly defeated. For some days after the battle the Gloucester garrison were too busy rounding up new prisoners, hoping that each in turn might prove to be Charles Stuart, to spare any time for hanging an old one. When that business was over and the young King, by hiding in an oak and other shifts, had escaped their vigilance, there was another reason for keeping him alive.

He heard of it from two prisoners who were lodged in his cell after the battle, Cotswold gentlemen, who had joined in the war from their perfect hatred of all sober employments. They told him that Massey had been taken. He was wounded, but not dangerously. If he lived he must stand his trial, and witnesses would be needed to testify against him. 'The bottom of the matter,' said the first gentleman, emptying his tankard, 'is that you, Sir, are to be King's evidence—no, damn it, Parliament's evidence.'

'That I will not be,' said Richard. 'General Massey has nothing to fear from my evidence.'

'Do not talk so loud; they cannot try him yet. Your affair will sleep, it may be forgotten.'

'It will sleep soundly enough,' said the second gentleman, puffing at his tobacco pipe. 'Massey has good friends. Godwin is Massey's friend; they served in Germany together.'

'If that is true, and I am to be evidence, why does not Godwin hang me?'

They could not tell him, but supposed that there might be a reason.

The keeper of the Northgate had a son, a cornet in Ireland, who had been at school with Richard and the Baughs. There was an old feud in Gloucester between the College and the Crypt Schools, and this feud served Richard well now, for the keeper loved to tell how his boy had gone out with the young gentlemen to break the heads of the Crypt scholars. As long as Mr. Carey was left in that prison he enjoyed the best in meat, drink and company that the house could afford. Only, the keeper's wife, an honest fat woman, would gaze at him weeping for half an hour together, being tormented by forebodings of some fearful end that must, she thought, overtake either him or her own son or both together. Richard knew that she wished him well, but he fled from her when he could, seeing that the Cotswold gentlemen found infinite occasion for mirth in her solicitude. He was, at that time, disposed to welcome the expectation of a fearful end, but he could not so well endure ridicule.

If he was inclined to murmur against Fortune, he had only to look out of his window to see how much worse others fared than he. Day after day, up the Northgate Street, Scots prisoners were brought into Gloucester. Of the sixteen thousand men who had followed the King all but a handful had been killed or taken, the fugitives who escaped from the field being, for the most part,

either slain by the country people, or plundered to their shirts and delivered into the hands of the Parliament. These unfortunates Mr. Carey saw dragged footsore and starving into the city. Their plight there was sad enough, for the gaols were crammed and there was little of food and shelter for them, either there or in all England. The Council of State was now absolute master of a multitude that had put it in deadly fear; custom and pity forbade the massacre of so many thousands; prudence, and what was thought justice, prevented their release. Whole regiments might have been sold to some foreign prince for the wars abroad, but no prince dared buy them, seeing that their only crime had been to serve their King. Some of them might have been shipped to the plantations, but Barbados was Royalist still. In the meanwhile, though they were given only biscuit and cheese to the value of twopence-halfpenny a day for each man, the expense of their keep was an intolerable drain on the exchequer.

Their plight Mr. Carey was to learn by experiment; on September 8th, five days after the battle, he was taken from Gloucester and brought to London, where he found himself at Newgate, very indifferently lodged. He was put in a cell which already held a drunken, swaggering thief and a roaring anabaptist, together with two young pickpockets and a sick old man accused of passing false money. He protested to the gaoler, offering to pay him well for a cleaner room and better company. But the gaoler was the master of a crowded inn whose guests were not at liberty to seek another house of entertainment. He was sure of such money as they had, and reserved his

favour for those whose friends were likely to furnish them with more. Mr. Carey's friends did not show themselves and his purse had grown light. The food in this prison was bad and extravagantly dear, and, his companions being all poor men, he was forced to provide for them too, or be kept awake all night with their cries and importunities. Even after he had fed them he could get no rest, for he lived in constant expectation of their robbing him.

He had written to Christopher Baugh that he was well and in Newgate, but he had not expressed his necessities; for though he loved him truly, he could not but remember that their friendship had been less profitable to Kit than to himself. Besides, his Kit was a Parliament man, and Richard's pride was a little rubbed in the matter of the Negative Oath; he knew that he had behaved himself honestly in that matter, but he did not know what his friend thought of it, especially since he had had no word from him since before the battle. He did not doubt in his heart that Kit would help him, but he would not be importunate, he would take that help as a free grace of friendship.

He had other friends, and especially among lawyers, but most of them were of the Royalist faction and must fall under the same suspicion as himself. The rest, he knew, had their hands full of business, for the courts were as full as the prisons, and every charitable person of the victorious party was straining his credit for some unhappy prisoner. Mr. Carey saw no help for it but to spend his money until it was gone, and then to fast patiently until he was hanged or his fortunes mended. He had no hope

of saving a penny, for he saw that his gaoler only feared that he might be hanged before all was spent. He had no fear of starving, for he supposed that when all was spent another rich man would come into that cell to be squeezed dry in his turn.

On the night of September 20th Mr. Carey sat on a stool with his back against the wall, fortifying his nose with a tobacco pipe that the Cotswold gentlemen had given him. The thief lay dozing and mumbling in the straw, but there was no sleep for the rest; the anabaptist had a prophesying fit upon him, the old man and the pick-pockets were his unwilling congregation. They sat in the light of a stinking tallow candle, for which Mr. Carey had paid because he did not choose to endure their company in the dark. Suddenly the door opened and the gaoler's voice called for him. He obeyed it gladly; at the least he hoped for better air in the passage. The thief roused up to curse him, swearing that now he would certainly be hanged. The anabaptist admonished him more terribly of Hell Fire. But the others, who saw their chief hope of subsistence torn from them, fell upon him with tears and lamentations, clinging to his knees and imploring him to leave them a little money, since he could have no use for it where he was going. They so hindered him that the gaoler was forced to come in and drive them off with threats and blows.

Being brought out of the cell, Mr. Carey was taken along several stairs and corridors until he found himself at last in the street.

After the foul, hot air of his prison the winds that

blew across the kennel were a cold nectar; he breathed them shuddering, but with rapture; with joy he saw the stars overhead and the moon half veiled in clouds. He had little time for these pleasures; there were two men waiting who put him into a hackney coach and got in beside him. They would not tell him where he was going, but that did not trouble him; he made sure that he was to be privately examined, either before the Council of State or by some of their great men.

When, alighting from the coach, he smelt the river mud and heard water lapping against stone, he could not trust his senses. He stood indeed upon the Thames bank; there was a low, thick mist upon the water and a lanthorn swinging from a masthead above it. He went down the steps into a wherry that he could not see, like a man in a dream. He did not know who had worked his deliverance. He thought that Kit had not so much power; he supposed that Phillida had done it through her husband. There was enough bitterness in that thought to check his joy, but not to kill it; he had sat for three weeks in the shadow of death; he believed that he was now free, and that he would presently be carried to France.

In this he proved most lamentably mistaken, for he was set on board one of those barges belonging to the Guinea merchants who had purchased from the Council of State fifteen hundred prisoners to work in a mine upon the West Coast of Africa. He was shipped under the name of James Piggot, a Derbyshire man who had died of dysentery.

VIII

As soon as Mr. Carey stepped on to the barge, he had a presentiment of evil so strong that he would have jumped back into the wherry. But, being unarmed, he was soon overpowered and clapped under the hatches. Even then he did not understand the greatness of his misfortune. When he began to perceive it he was astonished, for he did not know who in the world could have done him so ill a turn. At first he thought that he had truly been mistaken for another man. Then he supposed that Accepted Harrison had procured this ill-accident out of the mere badness of his nature. But, as he considered the matter, he saw clearly that he was put out of the way on account of General Massey, whose friends might be ignorant of his resolution not to give evidence, or might not trust to his discretion.

Yet, although this might be one reason for putting him away, he could not but believe that there was some private malice behind it; for he did not think that any man could be so inhuman as to condemn a stranger, who had never hurt him, to such a fate as his. Then he remembered what he had been told of the old friendship between Massey and Godwin, and how at his trial Godwin had pressed the evidence against him. He remembered Phillida's hard looks the day he was condemned, and, brooding upon them through interminable weeks in the filth and darkness of the crowded hold, he began to

believe that she, more than her husband, was the author of his miseries.

It happened that, when they came into the tropics, the ship lay becalmed for many days together and a great sickness broke out among the prisoners. Not a few of them had died already: from heat, bad air and stinking water: together with the fearful weight of spiritual wretchedness, as of so many persons torn away for ever from their homes, their wives and their children, to perish without hope at the ends of the earth.

Among the sick was Richard. As he lay in a fever, with the rats running over him to feed upon the bodies of the dead before they were thrown out to the sharks, he dreamt that he lay in Gloucestershire, in a field by the Avon. He saw the long slopes of Bredon Hill, and the sky behind it, and the level meadows full of cattle. He saw the willow-herb and tall spikes of loose-strife at the water's edge; but he could not see the water or come nearer to it; he could move neither hand nor foot. He heard the sea lapping against the ship's timbers above his head, and this noise came into his dream; for he imagined that it was the rippling of the stream in the rushes, and that if he could reach it, to drink of it and bathe himself in it, his pains would leave him, like the pains of the Assyrian who bathed in Jordan. Then he knew that there was one standing by him, and he cried out in his dream, 'For Christ's sake, who died for us, help me to Avon.' But the stranger did not move, and he saw that it was Phillida, who looked at him with that unpitying

countenance that she had shown him in Gloucester.

With the anguish of his spirit he awoke, and heard his neighbour crying out for water; but the man at his other side was dead and the rats were busy with him already. Then he cursed Phillida and swore in his heart that she and hers should pay him for the wrong he suffered.

Anger and obstinacy kept him alive, though so many of his companions died that the captain, fearing to lose his profits, used the survivors more kindly than he had done before, giving them leave to walk on deck to breathe the air and stretch themselves, the place where they were confined being so low that they could not stand upright there.

Mr. Carey was young and had a good natural constitution; as his health revived so did his spirits. He hoped to be delivered in one of two ways. First, that the ship in which he was carried might be delivered by Prince Rupert or by one of his captains. Secondly, that if he were landed upon the Coast, he might appeal to the Governor there; for he thought it very unjust that a man who had been condemned to be hanged in Gloucester, and who had never tried to evade his sentence, should be carried into Africa to suffer worse torment. He was very willing now to be hanged, in Gloucester or anywhere else, if only he might first be allowed to give his evidence against General Massey. Therefore when from the deck he saw Cormantyn Castle, the chief English fort upon the Coast, and the hills behind it, and the green trees, and the surf upon the beach, and when he heard the cannon and saw the sailors

striking sail to the Commonwealth flag, he rejoiced as though he had come to a desired country.

He was disappointed in his expectations, for he was not landed there, but farther east, at a place called Little Popo. Here there was neither hill nor fort, nor any tree but the cactus and the wild palm. Here was a flat country, drifted over with sand, and a few poor huts for a town. The sea raged upon the beach so furiously that no ship's boat could live in it. The prisoners were put in canoes and brought ashore by the Negroes, who manage that kind of craft very dexterously; but, in spite of their care, two of these canoes were overset and the Europeans in them, being inexpert swimmers, were nearly all drowned.

The survivors were marched inland to a place called Pepito, three days' journey from the coast on the confines of Ardra. Here was a mine that belonged to two Bristol merchants, the brothers Francis and Ezekiel Boone.

IX

NORTH of Pepito there was a desert; south and east lay the fringes of a mangrove swamp which stretched along the coast, by a chain of lagoons, to the Kingdom of Benin. The gold was taken from shallow workings in the dry bed of a stream, or from round pits two or three feet wide at the mouth and twelve to fifty feet deep. A man was lowered into each pit, and sat at the bottom scooping the earth near him into a calabash which was presently drawn up with cords by his companions. The loose soil which came up in the calabash was washed with water to separate the gold from the rest; but the quartz was first roasted on a fire and afterwards pounded with cankey stones.

As the gains of the trade were great for the merchants embarked upon it, so its risks were great also, the commodity being so precious that there was continual danger of secret theft and open robbery, and the toil in that climate so painful that no free man would endure it, except for unreasonable wages. But slaves were cheap, for there were wars in Africa, as well as in England, and prisoners of many nations were sold upon the Coast for the profit of their conquerors. The slaves exceeding their guards in number, many precautions were necessary, in that lawless country, to prevent their rising in insurrection. They were driven at night into several enclosures walled with faggots of thorny shrubs, and care was taken

that few of one nation or religion should be put together in the same enclosure. Besides this, their spirits were broken by the intolerable cruelty of their punishments and by the lowness of their diet; for they had no more than a little stinking fish, such as the Negroes eat there, together with a small quantity of millet which they made into cakes, grinding it themselves with their cankey stones. They had also to endure the heat and glare of the sun, the dust, the flies, the damp airs and exhalations in the wet season, and the want of sweet water in the dry; together with the dirt of their enclosures, where men of all conditions, both English and African, were herded together without any distinction and with scarcely any protection against the weather. The secret of the mine was well guarded, but that rumours of it did spread up and down the coast is proved by that name which was afterwards less justly applied to another part of the country : Little Bristol in Hell.

Richard Carey was here for nearly two years and a half, yet he seldom thought afterwards of the place or of his life in it, and remembered less about it than might be easily believed. To the day of his death, things that he had seen at that time would come back to him in dreams, more especially when he was feverish; but, while he was awake, what he did remember seemed to him like some story that he had heard or read rather than a part of his own life. It was as though his sufferings had burnt a hole in his memory instead of leaving a mark upon it.

Indeed, those sufferings were greater than belonged

to the nature of the country and of his occupation in it. The Boones were now his masters, and one of them, Mr. Francis Boone, had been in Bristol city when it was held by Prince Rupert. Soldiers had been billeted in his house and he had paid his share of the fines and confiscations levied on the citizens, so that he now had a perfect hatred of the Monarchic Principle and of all those that professed it. The chief weight of this hatred fell upon the English prisoners, who would have perished outright if his malicious cruelty had not been refined by Ezekiel.

Richard did not perish under it, but he was changed by it. As his body was toughened by those hardships that killed other men, so his spirit, which had been in the main kindly and placable, was hardened now and a little warped. As he was steadfast in enduring pain, so he became, for a time at least, careless of inflicting it. In his secret and unrelenting war with an enemy far stronger than himself he learnt patience and subtlety. Besides all this, he began to find much comfort in religion, which he had before neglected.

Among the prisoners was a certain Anglican divine, an Oxonian, one Thomas Evans, a man of no birth and little learning, but of a shining and courageous spirit. He had collected a small congregation with whom he met secretly to pray for the King and to administer the Sacraments according to the rites prescribed by his Church. He had no more than the rags of a Prayer Book; but that did not afflict him, for he knew the liturgy by heart.

Even in England the Book of Common Prayer was then proscribed, and that person risked imprisonment who should presume to use it. What was dangerous in London was a thousand times more dangerous at Pepito, and this increased the piety of the congregation, for while to some men spiritual comfort became the more precious when it was won so hardly, to others the knowledge that they were defying the Boones was the greatest consolation imaginable. This last reason wrought upon some of the Scots, who knew what Evans did but would not betray him, though they were themselves, like the Boones, severe Presbyterians, entirely abhorring all superstitious customs. He was betrayed at last by one of his own flock, an unhappy youth who was condemned for theft and tried to buy favour by telling all he knew.

Among the men who reverenced little Evans as a saint in his life, and after his death as a martyr, was Richard Carey. It happened that the two slept for a while in the same enclosure and that they often worked near each other in the mines. The parson, agreeably to the practice of his age, improved the time with scraps of spiritual exhortation. He was fond of quoting verses from the Psalms according to the Prayer Book version. These were very precious to Richard, partly because he had heard them in church when he was a boy, partly because, since the Puritans used a metrical version, the very form of words which he learnt from Evans seemed to him a vindication of his spiritual freedom in that hateful tyranny under which his body groaned.

The doctrine upon which Evans chiefly loved to dwell was that of cheerful submission to the will of God. He argued that we should accept without murmuring all earthly afflictions, remembering that whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and that bodily suffering is a furnace in which our souls are purged of their dross, so that they may become capable of enjoying, for ever, the bliss of the Heavenly Kingdom. He taught this by example as well as by precept, enduring blows and insults, heat, thirst, toil, and all the daily torments of their life, with such a constant and heroic mildness as won him the love of some while, joined as it was to his foolish face and ridiculous way of walking, it made him the butt of half the rest.

For all his insistence upon the duty of cheerful suffering he was no ascetic, inveighing very unnecessarily against the practice of Self-Mortification, which he called a Presumptuous Error. He used also to condemn the sin of Self-Destruction.

At the time that they were most thrown together, which was after his first attempt to escape, Mr. Carey had been brought very low, both in mind and body. His fierce hopes of returning to England to confound his enemies, of whom he counted the Godwins to be chief, were now succeeded by a weight of despair. He had not even to refresh him, as others had, a garden of pleasant recollections; for as the happiest hours of his life had been spent with Phillida (the thought of her being present with him when she herself was absent) so now the

remembrance of them brought him nothing but bitterness and shame. He was seriously minded to follow the example of his friend Humphrey Payne, a Worcestershire gentleman who, being pursued by the Boones with so inveterate a hatred that the barbarity of it became notorious even in that barbarous place, had escaped them by hanging himself.

Parson Evans arguing with him very seriously against this project, he was ashamed at last not to endure what the other did so willingly. Cheerfulness he could not reach, but he did attain to fortitude. He was also impressed at about this time with an idea of the absolute foreknowledge of God, and with the notion that nothing can move, in earth or heaven, except in accordance with the plan laid down for it before its creation. This was a part of his friend's teaching, for Evans had never in his doctrine the least tincture of Arminianism. But whereas, in Evans, this belief was coloured by its infusion in his simple and kindly spirit, in Richard it approached more nearly to absolute fatalism.

In spite of it he did not abandon his efforts to escape. The desire for escape was so woven into his nature that he believed its fulfilment to be a part of the divine plan for the universe.

X

THE Boones had a treaty with the neighbouring kings which in some particulars at least the Negroes observed faithfully, not failing to bring back such runaways as strayed into their fields and villages. Since all the slaves wore iron collars and the more troublesome had shackles on their feet, even those who had escaped brands and other marks might easily be known. It was therefore nearly impossible that any among them should reach the sea-shore, for the country on that side was more populous, especially near Fida, a port to the south-east, which being frequented by the ships of several nations might have offered them some hope of freedom.

The mangrove swamps might have sheltered them; in that tangle of bog and forest it was hard to trace a fugitive. But, both by the Negroes and by those Europeans who knew anything of them, the swamps were thought to be full of devils, and few were so hardy as to seek them. Richard, who feared no devil as he feared Ezekiel Boone, was among the few. With one companion, a Derbyshire man called William Barlow, he contrived in the confusion of a thunderstorm to hide among some piles of rubbish when the other slaves were taken back from the mines. At nightfall, the zeal of those Negroes who were set to watch the diggings being checked by the violence of the storm, they slipped away and, without misadventure,

crossed the seven or eight miles of open country that divided them from the edge of the swamps.

They wore no shackles at that time and had procured an axe and a trowel. William Barlow had, besides, a piece of flint for fire-making. They had no food with them, but trusted to catching as many birds and mice and other small creatures as would keep them alive. Indeed, they were happy enough to stumble their first morning upon a quantity of serpents' eggs, which served them as a provision for some time. They found, too, that the morasses of slime and water were less troublesome than they had expected. Unhappily, the sky was overcast each night so that they could not see the stars. As they had no compass with them they were bewildered, and walked back the second day into the very mouths of those dogs and Negroes who had been sent to find them.

William Barlow died shortly afterwards; but Richard was one of that band of thirty, mostly Scots, who crossed the desert in the next wet season.

This desert was entirely barren in the dry part of the year. Being five days' journey across in its narrowest part, with no wells or ditches in it, it was reckoned impassable for fugitives, since only those could hope to pass it who were burdened with a great provision of water.

Besides, as it was nearly flat, it was overlooked by that tower of adobe bricks which Ezekiel Boone had built for himself. Mr. Francis Boone, when he was not away upon the business of his House, often went to the digging grounds; but Ezekiel was never seen there. His limbs

were swollen to such a monstrous bulk that he could neither walk nor ride. He sat week in and week out upon his tower, under the pandanus thatch which he had caused to be set on poles as a shelter from the sun. No one in the settlement had seen him at all, except his brother and his own servants, with a few of the runaways and other slaves condemned for extraordinary offences. Yet the rest knew that he could see them with the perspective glass which he had in his tower. He often boasted that as long as God would vouchsafe to him the use of his eyes (which he trusted would be for a great while yet, as he would always humbly study to deserve it,) he should never need guards on the north side of Pepito. Indeed, there was reason in this; so great, among slaves and overseers, was the dread of him and of his glass, which some of them took to be a kind of familiar spirit. A few were so simple as to imagine that he could watch through it, not only the movements of their bodies, but of their minds also. Even those who were not so deceived, though they would freely execrate Mr. Francis, never spoke of Ezekiel but with a kind of awe; like ignorant and superstitious people who will speak of the Devil with reverence and a show of love, in case they should be punished for their true opinions.

It happened that once in the rains a number of the prisoners, with Richard among them, were sent to weed the millet at a place in the desert about half a mile from the main part of the settlement; for, at that season, the wilderness itself is clothed in grass and becomes the most

fruitful place imaginable. The overseers, to save themselves trouble, had brought the rations with them and, since it was impossible to cook any food in that continual downpour, were supplied with two bags of biscuit.

Early in the day, one of them happened to revile a slave called Andrew Herriot in very foul terms. He, as he was a passionate man, fell upon his abuser and struck him to the ground. Immediately a tumult arose between the prisoners and the overseers, for Herriot's friends would not give him up to be punished. At first they had only intended that he should run, while they hindered the pursuit for as long as they were able; but afterwards, perceiving that in this way they could only suffer instead of him, they resolved that they would all make the attempt together. So, as a revenge for their old injuries, and because they could neither take them nor leave them behind, they killed the overseers and made off across the desert.

Though their design had been so little considered, many things favoured it. The curtains of rain and mist prevented their being seen from the tower, and (the noise of the rain drowning the noise of the struggle) they might hope that their flight would not at first be known there. When it was discovered, the rain would wash their scent out of the ground so that the dogs could not follow it. The Negro runners could overtake them, but these they might escape in the mist. They were all shackled, but they were now so much used to moving in chains that this troubled them little, and they fancied that they should

soon find some way to deliver themselves. They did not fear to mistake their direction, for they had among them several Negroes who were hunters by trade. Besides all this, they had the biscuit with them; which seemed to many such an especial act of God's Providence towards them as only an Atheist would neglect.

They travelled as fast as they could, keeping together and allowing themselves little rest. The rain falling continually, they could refresh themselves while they walked by sucking the moisture out of their rags. For food, besides their biscuit, they had several kinds of salad, with frogs and other creatures. A few of them were so weak that they could not keep up with the rest; these were killed by their friends as an act of kindness, to save them from a worse end.

The weather began to clear upon the fourth day, and, the mists rolling off, they saw a chain of hills which seemed to promise them shelter. Towards evening the sun broke through the clouds and cast long rays across the plain, so that the wet grass shone like jewels, and each man saw his neighbour encompassed with a kind of glory. Then, with one accord, they praised God who had brought them out of the land of their captivity; and some wept with joy, whom no tribulation had ever moved to tears.

While they were still rejoicing, they came upon a piece of broken ground where, from the earth itself, there rose a band of Negroes armed with clubs and assegais. The fugitives had before agreed to stand together, if they

were attacked, and sell their lives as dearly as they could; but now they expected no enemy. They were straggling across the plain with the light in their faces, wearied by their march and still encumbered with their shackles, when they were assailed from every quarter, so that falling into confusion they began to run here and there and, in a few minutes, were entirely overcome.

Now was their state much worse than it had been before; and, as they soon perceived, the trap into which they had fallen was not laid by chance. They had been no freer than fish in a net, which swim here and there, thinking themselves at liberty, till they are suddenly drawn up out of the sea. From the hour of their leaving Pepito they had been encompassed by spies and runners; and now the King of Ardra had come with his men to lead them back into their prison.

XI

After this Mr. Carey believed for a time that God could intend nothing else than a general insurrection at Pepito. There were others who shared his opinions; but though they worked earnestly together they could achieve nothing; either their plans were betrayed, or they were wrecked by some accident.

All the gold taken from the mines was stored in the lower part of the tower. Sometimes it was left there for many months before it could be shipped at Fida. If guards, overseers and slaves (who all suffered, in their several degrees, from the same tyranny) could have joined together, they might easily have possessed themselves of the treasure. But this never happened.

The guards were inland Negroes, stronger and more warlike than the natives of the Coast. They were either slaves of the Boones, or soldiers hired out by their kings for a season. Being chosen for their courage and fidelity they were as hard to corrupt as to conquer; especially since, unlike the Negroes farther west, who will allow no European to approach their mines and understand very well the art of sophisticating gold, these barbarians could never learn the value of what they guarded.

The overseers knew it well, for they were nearly all Europeans; but few of them were worth corrupting. While the guards were the proudest of black people, these were, in the main, the most abject of white. A handful of them,

old Bristol men, were faithful to the masters from religion and a stiff notion of their duty. The rest were promoted slaves, or persons inclined to this kind of life by their poverty and by the licentious cruelty of their natures. Although they were called free they were not truly so; for, while they had better food and lodging than the slaves over whom they exercised authority, they had no greater hope of leaving the country. In effect they were prisoners too; but in every tumult they were bound to support the Boones, knowing very well that their old severities could not be forgiven.

When Richard understood this he made no more plans. He saw that his own strength and wisdom could not help him. The deaths of so many of his companions, and above all the cruel murder of Parson Evans, had bred a kind of hardness in him so that he suffered less than he had done at first. He lived from day to day, avoiding all unnecessary evils and pleasing himself with such diversions as his state afforded.

The Boones had decreed that the Parliament laws against cocking, dicing and so forth, should be strictly observed by their subjects. But, among so many desperate men, these laws were of necessity very unequally enforced. None were more deeply engaged in all unlawful games than the overseers. Besides cockfighting and baiting all such animals as they could get, they often made up matches among the slaves themselves for leaping, wrestling and other feats. The champions of each gang were envied by their companions; to give them strength

for their contests they had always the best food and the easiest labour.

Richard Carey had wrestled as a boy. Strong and active, with long arms and a good judgment, he became notable as a wrestler at Pepito, especially towards the end of his second year there. His overseer was Sebastian Punto, a Portuguese born upon the Coast and a great gambler. This man, at the time when he discovered Richard, had staked away nearly all that he possessed and counted upon the new wrestler to repair his fortunes. Richard, besides the delight which he took in the sport, had several benefits from it; not the least was being rid of his shackles, for Sebastian reported to Mr. Francis that he was now too weak to support the weight of them and that his spirit was entirely subdued.

He was successful at first, winning several matches, until he was set against a Dutch Mulatto, a sailor who had travelled among the Asiatic Islands, where he had learnt so many outlandish tricks that he was now reckoned invincible. He overcame Mr. Carey with the greatest ease imaginable. Sebastian, who had laid out more than he could afford upon his champion, both in money and vainglory, (for he had boasted of him extremely,) was distracted by this accident and Richard was condemned again to hardship and ill-usage. But, as he was seldom turned from what he set his mind to, he prevailed upon the Dutchman to teach him all his art in return for a clasp-knife and some other trifles. Soon he had surpassed his former reputation, and might perhaps have overcome

his tutor; but neither bribes nor punishments could persuade him to that, for part of his bargain was that he never would attempt it.

His constancy, though often he paid dearly for it, met with its reward. Sebastian Punto, who was not very honest, believed that the Boones had come to suspect him. He was tired of Pepito, and began to think of a house that he had in the island of S. Thomé and of his wife there. He planned to steal away from the settlement and, casting about for a man who could help him, hit on Richard Carey, whom he knew by proof to be both strong and faithful. He took him aside one day and began to sound him.

Mr. Carey, mistrusting him, would say nothing; except that he had given up all hope of escape and was content with his present way of life. But his caution only inflamed the other, who knew that he had made two attempts already and that he was fit for a third.

It once happened that Sebastian was sent on the business of the mine to a Negro village about half a day's journey from Fida. By chance he had received intelligence that a certain ship, whose master he had formerly known, was calling at the port for slaves. He hoped to reach that ship, and fancying that his luck had changed since he fell in with Richard, resolved, for greater security, to take him with him.

Although he had leave to take a servant he dared not openly choose Mr. Carey; for his nature so inclined him to double-dealing that he would not tread a straight path

where he could find a crooked one. He therefore proposed to leave him in a pit at the edge of the digging ground when the gangs were brought in to their enclosures, and to fetch him out after nightfall before he started on his journey.

The digging ground was wide and it was often shifted. It was not fenced in, but guarded at night by Negroes and their dogs, with great fires built here and there that no thief might move unseen across it. These Negroes were not its only inhabitants, for the slaves working in the pits were sometimes left in them for days and nights together. The pits, from the manner in which they were dug, were always broader at the bottom than at the top. As their sides were never shored up, they were certain to fall in sooner or later. When they were deep it was not convenient to draw up the miner very often, lest, through the friction of the rope, the sides should crumble before their time. Sick and worn-out slaves were commonly put in the ruinous pits that each might yield its last grain of profit before some rain storm, loosening the earth at the pit head, overwhelmed the miner and the mine together.

Mr. Carey was not in love with that kind of death. He had been condemned to a pit before. Now, when he heard his comrades move off, with the sad lilting song of the Negro diggers, his spirits were not exalted. As the Israelites hankered after their fleshpots, so did he hanker after the glow of the cooking fires and those poor scraps of provisions which the overseers had forgotten to throw down to him. He had no faith in Sebastian's professions,

believing that, if he could mean them honestly, he could not have courage enough for such an enterprise. He thought it possible, especially since the business had gone so far without his moving a finger in it himself, that even this Sebastian might be the instrument appointed for his deliverance. But, while he remembered Joseph and many others who, as Scripture tells us, were brought out of captivity, he could not forget those honest men he knew who had died in it. He trusted that they now had the consolations of Everlasting Bliss, but he could not feel secure of these for himself. Besides, he did not want such consolations, he was not ready for them; not before he had seen the righteous triumph and those that hated them brought to confusion. He thought of the wicked in high places and a great horror fell upon him. If he died now, how should he not believe that the Powers of Hell had prevailed? Kneeling in the pit, he prayed earnestly that God would remove this temptation from him.

Night fell as he was praying. After a time he heard something moving at the pit head. Looking up, he saw between him and the stars a shape like a monstrous horned devil. He knew that it was one of the Negro soldiers, in his headdress of ostrich feathers, peering down the shaft; and he crouched against the side of it, still as an image, as though the man could have seen him moving in the shadow. Presently the soldier called to one of his companions, and they began to throw pebbles into the pit. When they had thrown two or three they went away laughing together.

None of the stones hit Mr. Carey, but they had come as a mocking answer to his prayers. One of them, striking against the side of the pit, had glittered in the moonlight which fell a little way down it. He saw that it was a lump of gold. He remembered what he had often heard, that Africa was the Devil's country and that Hell lay in the middle of it; if, indeed, Pepito itself was not a part of Hell. He had heard a man threatened with death answer, 'How can I die, seeing that I am in Hell already?' The stars above him were bright and terrible; he saw them shining, one above the other, like eyes in the several stories of a tower. He thought they had been set there to watch him. Soon they were blotted out by smoke and the glare of flames, and he perceived, by this and by the sounds he heard, that the Negroes had lighted their fires nearer to his shaft than they commonly did; Sebastian would not come to him that night. He was faint from hunger and the ground on which he lay was cold and wet with dew. He shivered, and felt pains shooting through him, and knew that he had fever. He prayed no more, but settled himself to sleep as best he could till morning.

About midnight he was awakened by another pebble. Looking up again, he heard his name called softly. The rope was lowered into his hands; he clung to it and was drawn up to the mouth of the pit. The fire was still burning a little distance off, but it was low now and the night very dark. Sebastian awaited him with a Negro whom he had brought to work the pulley. They sent the Negro into the pit and slipped away.

XII

Had Sebastian taken Mr. Carey with him out of pure compassion, instead of to serve his own ends, he could not have expected more gratitude from him. He clearly judged that a lifetime of service would be too little to requite him for his magnanimity.

Mr. Carey, on the other hand, had not followed him out of devotion, but only because he perceived in him the instrument (though a poor one) appointed to deliver him out of his captivity. He acknowledged a debt, even to the instrument, but he was not disposed to change one slavery for another. Besides, he was displeased because Sebastian had not brought the file that he had promised him with which to cut through his iron collar.

But they were too near Pepito to quarrel, so he took without dispute those burdens that the overseer laid upon him. Sebastian at first reserved for himself the cutlass, the pistol, the bag of balls and powder, the two knives and the mariner's compass which he had brought with him. But of these the balls and powder soon came to Richard's share, for the other had a secret load; he wore about his loins a wide hollow belt stuffed full of gold dust. He did not speak of it, but Richard had known for a long while that it was there.

So they travelled for two days without adventure, having for their pass a stamped metal disk belonging to the Boones. With this for a charm they crossed the swamp,

being ferried in canoes over several lakes and rivers, and came thence into a fine country, well furnished with a variety of beautiful trees and with many populous villages filled with a civil kind of people.

Sebastian, who had been so forward at the beginning of the enterprise, now began to hang back. It was as though he forgot more and more what evils he had suffered, and remembered the power of those he had offended. Mr. Carey believed that he only wanted resolution to go humbly back to Pepito. He combated this propensity with all the arguments that he could command, dwelling much upon the hardships of the life in that desert, the meagreness of its rewards, and the sour, suspicious nature of the masters that must prove the ruin of every person who had to do with them. He enlarged upon the pleasures of the world outside Pepito, the happy chances that awaited there a man of parts and spirit, the ease and safety of their present venture. He talked so well that he kept the overseer from turning back, but he could not talk well enough to drive him on. Sebastian dared not go to Fida.

At Fida there were spies of the Boones; but in the village to which he was bound they had an agent. Him, too, Sebastian feared; and Mr. Carey had no wish to bring his convert under such an influence. So they lay for a while in another village, lodging in a house with a hedge about it and a round roof plastered over with mud to keep the thatch from burning. Richard, in spite of his cares, took pleasure in the neatness of this house,

with its clean-swept floor; as well as in the beans, the onions, the chickens and the mutton dressed for him every day by the householder's wives. Sebastian himself confessed that all kinds of provisions were notably good in that country; only he complained of the scarcity and dearness of the Pardon wine; but Mr. Carey was well content with the beer which the Negro women brew out of millet.

Sebastian was busy all this while sending messages to his ship's captain, offering at one time to go to Fida, at another to meet the sailors on a beach some way removed from the common port, and earnestly bargaining for a cheap passage. When he had spent on the messengers a good bag of boesies, (being, indeed, all the money of the country with which he was furnished for his masters' affairs,) he received intelligence that the ship had sailed.

This was a hard stroke. They could not wait for another ship because the King of Fida was a friend of the Boones and the people round them were his subjects. Sebastian would have gone back to the Boones; but he knew that his delay would not be forgiven, especially since he had spent the money entrusted to him. He could not make it good from the gold in his belt, for the common people there do not value gold, but only boesies. Thus Mr. Carey, working on his fears, persuaded him at last that, by the channels in the swamps, they might easily reach some port in another kingdom.

These channels were so confused and tortuous that strangers could scarcely hope to find a way among them.

But Mr. Carey, who now understood several African languages and had used his ears very well while he was eating, knew that there were traders who brought their canoes along them from an incredible distance. Such people, if they could meet with them, might as he perceived be their salvation. He therefore prevailed upon Sebastian to pretend to a desire for the accory beads and the striped Benin cloths which these traders deal in, and learnt, by this artifice, that a party of foreign Negroes was then encamped in the marshes on an island known to the villagers.

To reach the island they needed a canoe and a guide. These they could find in the next village; but, while Mr. Carey desired to take only one guide, there was no Negro there who would go with them alone. They were therefore forced to hire two men, whom they paid with some of the clothes Sebastian had brought with him, a hat and a pair of breeches.

Though they had resolved to start at dawn, the Negroes piling one delay upon another, it was noon before they left the millet fields and came into the forest. They left the white glare of the sky for a dark tunnel. It was hot in the tunnel, the leaves had been parched and shrivelled off with the heat; yet the branches were so thick over head that only a few rays pierced through them, to spot the path but not to light it. For nearly two miles the travellers stumbled over roots and creepers before they reached the lake where the canoe was waiting.

This lake was a miracle. There were trees beside it

like bracken fronds but as tall as steeples. They went up into the air and down into the water, which reflected them like a mirror. Where the mirror was wide enough to reflect the sky, it blazed in the middle like white-hot metal, but for the most part it was narrow and wholly shaded over.

Sebastian slept in the canoe as much as the flies would let him. Richard would not sleep. To keep him from nodding he took a paddle, dipping it into the water as he saw the Negroes do. The water was as warm as the air and the air as moist as the water. Water and air rotted together with a heavy smell.

Now, with that graveyard smell, and the stillness, and the slow dripping of the paddles which was like a knell, and the strangeness of the place, (the water plants being both like and unlike those that he had known in England,) fear fell upon Mr. Carey and the sweat on his body ran cold. He and Sebastian had been nearly a week from Pepito; he could not believe that they had been unwatched, for he did not think that Sebastian was so far trusted. He knew that the Boones had eyes in many places; the spots and shafts of light in the forest were pledges, not of Mercy, but of all-seeing malice. He remembered that the Psalmist says, ' I cried and there was none to deliver me ', and that some are not born to salvation. The silence of the Negroes disquieted him. They were strangers to him; he judged them, by their physiognomy, to be both sullen and covetous. He remembered how easily they might lead him into an ambush. If they

purposed it he had no remedy. There was no turning back. He waited to see what would happen. He had one of Sebastian's knives in his belt and he did not intend to be taken alive.

The Negroes were paddling less warily than he; they turned the point of a promontory and ran full tilt upon a rock. This rock was not of stone, but of smooth glistening hide. It plunged, and by its plunging the boat was overturned. They were all in the water, in a shoal of kicking brutes like monstrous fat horses.

Mr. Carey was a swimmer; by Sebastian's shrieks, he perceived that the overseer was not. He towed him ashore with some trouble through the thickest part of the herd. They did him no harm; from their snorts and splashing he supposed that they were the more afraid. When he had climbed the bank he saw the canoe floating bottom upwards and the two Negroes swimming for the farther ashore.

Sebastian, as soon as he had coughed the water out of his lungs, would have shouted to them; but Mr. Carey would not suffer it. He saw in this wreck the hand of Providence. He was as sure now as though an angel had told it to him that these men had planned to betray them; more especially since, though, by the overturning of the canoe, they had lost all the fine clothes and other useless furniture which Sebastian had obliged him to carry from Pepito, they still had those things which seemed most material to their safety. Sebastian, in order to save himself, had begun to pull off his clothes in the

water; but he still wore the pistol slung round his neck. The cutlass had gone; but Mr. Carey had preserved an axe of the kind that Spaniards call machete, which he had won gaming with the villagers. He had besides the bag full of balls and powder, the knife, and the mariner's compass. Sebastian had the other knife.

Here were mercies enough to make any wise man thankful, but Sebastian had not a thankful spirit. He would do nothing but moan and wail because he had lost his beltful of gold. He himself had torn it off in the confusion; and it was well for him that he had done so, for he must have sunk to the bottom like a stone with that weight of metal upon him. Now that he was saved he lamented because he had not saved his treasure. He did not choose to blame himself, so he blamed Richard, assailing him with blows. Mr. Carey, who would not endure this kind of treatment while he could resist it, was forced to knock him down to make him understand that he was no longer overseer.

Sebastian was awed by this argument; but there was little of love and good fellowship between them. Mr. Carey had resolved to push through the forest in an easterly direction, keeping as far as he could to the paths made by wild beasts. These were as wide and well-trodden in places as streets in a city; but they led to no city, only from pasture to wallowing pool, from one marsh to another. Where they failed the travellers must hack their way through thickets of dry, hanging creepers. This was hard work enough for an obstinate man; and Sebastian

hated toil and was soon discouraged, but Richard forced him to do his share, not knowing how soon he might need his own strength.

While they worked they must live. The trees were full of birds, but these were scarcely worth powder and ball, if the pistol could have carried far enough to hit them. When Mr. Carey was a boy in Gloucestershire the bow was not wholly disused among keepers and huntsmen, and from such people he had learnt something of archery. He had no crossbow and no means to make one, but he fancied that he could contrive a long bow, after the old English fashion, if he could find a bow string. That day he brought down a small deer (which sprang out of a bush almost at his feet) by throwing the machete at it. They made a fire to cook it with by striking sparks from the flintlock on dry leaves.

At night Sebastian wished to make another fire to protect them from wild beasts. Mr. Carey judged that this was not expedient, for the reflection of the glow might be perceived by their enemies; so they climbed instead into a high tree, binding themselves with creepers to the branches lest they should fall while they were sleeping. Indeed, they slept little; the cold and the intolerable cramps in their limbs forced them to descend before midnight. Before he came down, Richard conceived the idea of climbing higher to see what he could of the country that they must pass through on the morrow. There was a bright moon, but it shone on no more than an ocean of mist.

At sunrise he climbed up again. The mists curled away in many coloured wreaths; between them he saw a great plain stretching to the east and watered by many lakes and rivers. It was planted with low trees set like orchard trees without any undergrowth, their boughs silver white as though they had been laden with blossom. He thought that he was looking at Eden before Adam was made, for he saw no villages.

When Sebastian saw this Eden he tore his hair and wept; he knew it for a mangrove swamp. The white trees were dead mangrove trees. The plain was not sound earth, to bear the weight of man and beast, but only slime.

XIII

When Mr. Carey had examined this swamp country more nearly he perceived that Sebastian had told him the truth; they could go no farther by land. But while Sebastian was ready almost to lie down and die, Richard would not, choosing rather to try his fortune upon another element. He went back to the place of the wreck. The canoe and the Negroes had gone, but he found a paddle entangled among the rushes and fetched it ashore as a singular prize.

He had now to build a boat. He wished for a coracle of skins stretched over basket work, such as he had seen on the upper reaches of the Severn, but he had not the skill to make it; the best that he could contrive was a kind of light raft made with bundles of reeds tied together with creepers. Sebastian was very unwilling to trust himself to this machine; he set out upon it with a thousand ill prognostications. Indeed their state was hard enough; their raft, although it did not sink, floating under the water rather than upon it. Besides, it was caught up perpetually in weeds and rubbish, so that with their utmost endeavours they could barely move it. Even Mr. Carey could not hope to travel far in such a vessel. The most that he intended was to keep alive for as long as he could, loitering up the main channels so as to intercept those foreign merchants.

In one thing he was happy. At sundown on the first

day they landed upon a part of the swamp that was higher and firmer than the rest with a thicket of trees growing upon it like the trees on the mainland. Here were bushes too, and clumps of dead grass; but these had been lately burnt away to make a kind of clearing.

Besides these marks of a fire, there was one tree growing by itself near the bank that had rags of cotton cloth tied round its branches and an overturned calabash, carved with a pattern that they had not seen near Fida, lying before it. Sebastian said that this was a fetish tree, and Mr. Carey perceived that this mud bank was an inn, and that the rags and the calabash were tribute paid to the landlord. Here he resolved to wait till other guests should come.

They did not wholly want for food. Mr. Carey had made his bow, stringing it with the cord from Sebastian's hat. With this, and with arrows whose points he sharpened in a fire, he sometimes hit one of the grey parrots which flew low over the swamp. In the channels were fish, spiny and flavoured with mud, while great crabs, blue, yellow and green, had their homes among the mangrove trunks.

This diet was scanty enough; it was mended soon with worse. On the day after they landed the rainy season began. Then the mud brought forth a monstrous birth : lizards and hopping fish, with frogs as broad as plates, loathsome as any that swarmed in Pharaoh's chambers. Nor did these alone feel that reviving power ; the grass and the bushes sprang up again; the creepers,

which had hung dry and brittle from the trees, lived too and flung out their sprawling arms. These choked the ways through the thicket and grew so fast that, as one limb was hacked off, others seemed, hydra-like, to shoot out in its stead. From these limbs when they were cut dropped white and yellow blood, rank-smelling and poisonous. At times a bough, being laid hold of, would glide away as a blotched and painted serpent. There were ticks on the underside of every leaf and the air was alive with flies.

The rains began with thunderstorms. Between these storms the clouds hung so low upon the earth that the swamp became a twilight country, where the bats, furry and horrible, hunted all day with their blind eyes. At night no star or moon could pierce that canopy; but the mud itself and the rotting things upon it shone with a pale infected light, as holding, even in the torrid zone, the cold fires of a polar hell. At last those fires were put out and there was no sound, day or night, but the drumming of the rain.

By all these things Mr. Carey was not dismayed; remembering how, in the wilderness, God had shown Himself to the Children of Israel as a pillar of fire by night and as a cloud by day. In the pit he had been tempted to deny God, but he saw now that He Who had delivered him from that pit and from the hand of Ezekiel Boone was able to deliver him here also. Their missing the ship he took as a mark of Divine indignation at his want of faith; he resolved to sin no more, but to endure his

present trials without murmuring. They terrified him the less because, to a generous spirit, it seemed more tolerable to be drowned in a bog than to suffer the shame of his old slavery.

Though his mind was constant his body was enfeebled. The fever that had taken him while he was still at Pepito did not leave him; it fed on the marsh water that he drank. Besides, as he dragged himself through the sloughs, the leeches and other vile things that drained his blood drained his strength also, and his limbs became so weak that they were hardly able to support him.

As for Sebastian, he was distracted with fears, now calling on his saints, now crying out against them with horrid blasphemies. Yet, like a smooth, spotted fungus, he drew nourishment from the unwholesome air so that his strength increased as Mr. Carey's declined. Against Mr. Carey he had conceived a devilish malice, imagining that he had stolen the belt full of gold that had been lost in the wreck. This imagination gained upon him as his intellect grew more disordered, so that he followed Richard all day with threats and tears, importuning him to deliver up the gold again, or at least to tell where he had hidden it. When he found that his prayers were vain, he planned to cut off Mr. Carey's head and take it back to Ezekiel. There was nothing to hinder him in the first part of his design but his own want of courage. Mr. Carey still had the pistol, but the pan was now so rusted with the wet that it was completely useless; besides, the powder and its cowhide bag had rotted together.

He observed the same precautions as he had done at first, sending Sebastian ahead while they were marching and always sleeping by himself with his back against a tree; but as he grew weaker the other grew bold. Waking at night he would find Sebastian lying nearer and nearer to him. Once he was roused from sleep by a blow from a knife which left a long scratch across his shoulder.

His end now seemed nearly certain; but the Lord did not will that he should fall by such a hand. Once, wading across a sheet of water, Sebastian fell into a hole and caught at a floating log to save himself. The log became a devil with shining jaws that bit his arm off at the elbow. As he thrashed about and cried, his arm spouting blood, came other devils that tore him in pieces and devoured him. Richard, who was in the water too, saw all this and could not hinder it. Wading ashore, he cast himself upon the ground, thanking God for His infinite mercies towards himself, and yet filled with horror at the miserable end of that poor wretch.

He was now alone in the swamps, but the fever which burned in him brought him strange company. Though his mind was empty his tongue raved on by itself, so that he wandered through the rain singing love-songs and drinking-catches, and often he would repeat whole discourses that he had heard long ago and did not think to remember, with oaths, prayers, railings, threats and dreadful cries as of fear or anger. Sometimes, coming to himself, he would hear the echoes of his own voice and wonder who it was that called. When he was rational

he saw mouse-coloured apes that gibbered in the mist from the trailing branches; but he observed them very little, his thoughts running upon things that he had done and suffered long before, so that he went over them in his mind like a player rehearsing his part, remembering them piece by piece, as they had happened, with every circumstance of colour, shape, and sound. Besides, men whom he knew came out of the swamp, and he spoke to them and they to him, though some of them had been dead for a long while. Afterwards he saw that God had sent their ghosts to warn and comfort him and he was troubled for those of them whom he thought were still alive. But then he remembered what the Negroes say of sleeping men who leave their bodies and wander through the world.

Those that he saw most often were Christopher Baugh; two Scots, Erskine and Halliday; an old groom of his called Peter Hallet; and William Barlow, the Derbyshire man. Parson Evans he saw seldom at first but afterwards most often. With all the wanderings of his mind, he seldom went to England. He never saw Phillida and did not often think of her. But he did not forget that he had still to perform a signal act of retribution; when he was so weary that he longed for death, he could not die; he must struggle on because he knew that he was an Instrument of Wrath.

The rain still falling on the swamp, the waters rose and flowed over the mudbank. Richard, sleeping under the fetish tree, woke to find them washing over him

He thought he had fallen into the river. When he stood up he found that the stream flowed almost to his knees and that there was no dry ground left. To escape the water he climbed into the lower branches of the tree.

Now it happened that this tree, which was a little one, was set on the bank and that the bank was hollowed with the force of the water. When Mr. Carey climbed into it, the mud at its roots being continually washed away, the tree began to turn over. With his weight and the washing of the water it presently fell. He was in the river, clinging to the branches.

XIV

The next thing he remembered was lying by a fire. The wood, hissing as the rain fell upon it, burned with more smoke than flame. He remembered that he was carried in a boat, and, among the pains and discomforts of his sickness, that he was not able to move his arms.

Afterwards he perceived that they were bound with cords; but who were the people then with him, or how many they were, he could not tell. The fever still working in his brain, now the sound of their voices swelled to a great roar, and now it shrank to a murmur; now the man nearest to him would tower up and fill the heavens, now he was diminished to a pigmy. So with numbers; there was no counting these men, for the sum was never twice the same. For a great while he did not know that they were all Negroes; they seemed to take the shape of his known friends.

When at last he came to himself, he was lying in a hut on a mat of woven straw. His hands were not tied now, but he was fastened to a stake by a chain round his leg. Negro women brought him drink in a calabash and great bowls of savoury food. In the evenings a multitude of people sat down in his hut; the old men in front with the heads of women and boys peering above their shoulders. They seemed to ask him questions, but he could not answer them, for they talked a language he

had never learnt. Sometimes they sang together and played upon several instruments. The heat, with the greater multitude of bodies pressing round him, was more than he, in his extreme weakness, could endure; once or twice he fainted away.

With all this they used him very kindly. All through the day, as he lay between waking and sleeping, from time to time some man would come into the hut, sit down on the ground before him, and make him a long harangue. Always the speaker left behind him some present: a handful of nuts, a fish, a few beads, a mess (in a little bowl) of crayfish and red pepper, a roll of bark cloth or a smaller roll of cotton. The cloth and other such things were stored in a corner of the hut. The food was left beside him on the ground; if it was more than he could eat, the rats and mice that overran this place helped him out with it. Afterwards, when he became better acquainted with these people and knew how poor they were, he was astonished at their generosity.

Presently, as his strength came back to him, he grew weary of that hut and made signs to those about him that they should let him go free. They seemed to deny him at first; but he persisting, they brought him a smith who knocked off his shackle. He struggled then as far as the door, though he was still so weak that he could not stand alone.

After that he grew stronger and could venture farther into the world. He found himself outside the forest, on a sandy beach by a great lake of salt water. There were

a dozen huts beside his own, which was built a little apart from the rest with a fence round it and pieces of white baft tied to the posts. The village was poor and dirty enough and stank of dead fish. There was a grove of palm trees planted near it.

On the first day that he reached the palm grove there was a market held there. He saw no stalls, but the goods were laid upon the ground, neatly disposed on large leaves. Here were millet cakes and small piles of beans, racks of dried fish, rolls of bark cloth, with a few common Dutch clay pipes and other trifles. As soon as he came near there was a great clamour, the market women packing up their goods. Some men that stood near seemed to prevent them, courteously entreating him, by their gestures, to take what he pleased. To satisfy them, though he had no need of anything, he chose a pipe stem from one place and a nut from another; but there being, as far as he could see, no payment either asked or given, and the faces of the vendors expressing the greatest dejection, he wearied soon of that entertainment and frequented these markets no longer.

At first, when he went abroad, he was followed by a concourse of children. Soon the children only followed him when their other sports failed them. But if he went too far along the beach, there was always some young man, better armed than was common there, who seemed to warn him of dangers farther on and to beg him kindly to return. Once, out of mere idleness he climbed into a canoe; and immediately a dozen men surrounded him with

their clubs and fish spears, all crying out together; which was the nearest to any discourtesy that he had from them. What troubled him most was a white-headed man, toothless and shaken with a palsy, who followed him as it were secretly, and would sit beside him when he dozed on the beach. When he woke he would find this poor creature gazing at him with the tears rolling down his face. Once or twice, when they were alone together, the old man crept near to him, whispering and mumbling as though he had a secret to impart and, by his frequent looking round and other gestures, showing the liveliest terror of its being overheard by some of his countrymen.

He had another intimation of his danger, less rational.

As this village lay upon the open beach, when the rains were over and the sky was clear again, the stars shone down upon it. He saw them at night through a hole or two in the thatch of his hut. He remembered then his old conceit that the stars were spies for Ezekiel.

His reason told him that such heavenly bodies were ordained for other ends; but reason could not altogether command him. When he woke at night and saw, through the hole above his head, a golden Eye staring down at him, he broke into a sweat of fear. He remembered that he did not know where this village was, whether it lay east or west of Fida, and how far it might be from Pepito. If these villagers were subject to the King of Fida they might be only waiting till they could conveniently deliver him up to the Boones.

By this suspicion he wronged them entirely; they

were, indeed, so far west of Fida that the king of that country was no more to them than the Grand Duke of Muscovy. They had bought Mr. Carey from the merchants who had picked him off his fetish tree, not in order to betray him to his enemies, but only because, at a certain festival, they would need a man of a yellowish complexion as a sacrifice to their gods. Had Mr. Carey understood their language he would never have learnt this, they being too kindly a people ever to tell him that they meant to offer him up. Not understanding them he brooded the more, until he was certain that he ought not to stay in that place. At first he did not know how to leave it; in the day he was watched, and at night he lay in his hut with a Negro asleep in the doorway. Then he remembered that, the floor being of sand, he could burrow under one of the walls. The paling outside did not trouble him at all; it was so low that he could step over it. He had lost in the rains the compass, the knives and the other things which Sebastian had brought from Pepito; but he contrived in a few days to filch a line, some fish hooks and a spear with an iron head, which he hid together in the sand in a place he knew.

He made his attempt on a cloudy night, when the villagers were feasting with some of their neighbours under the palm trees. He had no need to dig under the wall, for his guards left him early as soon as he seemed to be asleep. He walked out of the doorway and down to the place where he had left his spear, with no one to hinder him. So he went on to the canoes and found them

unguarded. Only, while he was choosing which he should take, he heard a rustling and a man stood up among them. He grasped his spear, though he was very unwilling to use it, but found soon that he had to do with no enemy; here was no more than that same old man who had wept over him, and who shuffled round him now with great demonstrations of joy.

He chose his canoe, putting paddles in it and a mat, with some bakhovens and a string of dried fish that he had brought from the hut. The old man helped him to push it into the water, and he set out with a strong sense of Providence guiding him.

XV

BEFORE they parted, this poor creature who was his friend had given him one present which was of inestimable use to him. It was no less than that which Prometheus gave the world : the gift of fire. Mr. Carey had now no flint and steel, and he depended wholly upon the little earthen pot with a few pieces of charcoal in it which the old man set in the prow of his canoe.

He kept to the north side of the lake and entered the forest again by a channel in the sand. Now he had no doubt of the way he should go, for among the things that the Negroes had given him was a Portuguese coin worth a farthing or two. This he carried in a pouch slung from his shoulder. Whenever he came to a cross channel, unless he had a strong impulse to take one way or the other, he spun his coin to see which he ought to follow. He did this only if the channels led to the west, for he remembered his first plan and still kept in a westerly direction.

His life now was not unpleasant. He lived on the wild fruits, and on fish which he caught with the baited hooks trailing behind his canoe and afterwards roasted on a fire set alight from the coals in his fire pot. This fire pot served him for other uses, for at night it cast such a glow that the fish came up to the top of the water to look at it and he could spear them as the Negroes do, sitting in the bows of his boat. He had no great care in

the world except to keep his fire alive. His coin led him partly through the mangrove swamps, which were dreary enough, and partly between solid banks, where the forest trees sheltered him from the excessive heat of the sun by day and from the dews by night. In the daytime he often went ashore to stretch his limbs and get the stiffness out of them; but he commonly slept in the canoe. Though he saw crocodiles, larger than those that had destroyed Sebastian, with wild beasts of several other kinds, they never offered him the least hurt. When his coin led him (as it sometimes did) to a blind alley where he could get no farther, but was forced to go back half a day's journey by the way he had come, he always supposed that, through being out of the main channel at that time, he had escaped some signal danger.

For now that sense of an Overruling Providence, which had visited him from time to time ever since he first began to feel religion at Pepito, was upon him constantly, until he half believed that if his hands had dropped the paddle the canoe must of itself have taken him the way he ought to go. For all this he did not remit his labour, knowing that he must do his part which had been laid upon him. The thing which most strengthened him was the company of Parson Evans. He had seen Evans less often than the others when he had fever in the rains; now, when he saw them no longer, this ghost was with him continually. He never spoke, and Richard dared not speak to him nor look too hard at him for fear that he should vanish; but, as he sat in his canoe, with the tail of his

eye he could see his friend walking in a kind of glory. Now was banished that worst dream he had—of Evans's face when he died, which had haunted him, waking and sleeping, for nearly two years. He did not often now think of Pepito, and England he remembered less often still. His thoughts were the reflections on the water and the glancing of light through the leaves.

Thus he travelled for so many weeks that he lost count of them, until the sides of his canoe, which he had bruised from time to time against the roots of trees and old stumps sticking out of the river, began to let in so much water that he was forced to drag it ashore and empty it out five or six times a day. He had no tools to mend it with, having neither axe nor knife, but only a spearhead, which was not very fit for that kind of work. Besides, his fish hooks were all lost but one, which he preserved only by a kind of miracle. The last of his misfortunes was the loss of his fire pot. He was always careful, when he emptied his canoe, to put this first in a safe place. One day when he climbed ashore, the bank being rotten, his foot slipped, and he fell headlong. His pot was smashed to pieces and the coals, more precious to him than jewels, fell hissing into the river.

He was forced now to eat his fish raw when he could catch them, for he had never learnt the art which the Negroes have of making a fire by rubbing two sticks together. Once or twice on his journey he had found himself upon the outskirts of a village, but he had always changed his course at such a point, not intending to trust

himself, before he must, to the society of any human creature. Now he must seek that which he had so earnestly avoided.

On the same day that he lost his fire he saw two men fishing in a canoe.

He did not immediately direct his way to them, but watched them to see which way they would go. That day he lost them. Two days later he saw a canoe come out of a narrow creek whose mouth was quite hidden by bushes. His own canoe being at that time nearly full of water, he sank it with some trouble near the mouth of the creek and climbed ashore there, for he had an inward monition that he would not need it any more. He was sorry afterwards that he had done this, the forest being extraordinarily close and thorny.

Here again his spearhead helped him very little, but, as there was no turning back without a boat, he struggled forward and came out at last upon a path or alley way through the thicket. This path took him to a marsh. Across the marsh he saw a village planted on a low mound.

The forest near the marsh was not so thick, being much trampled by cattle. The marsh itself had pools in it for cattle to wallow in : it was half pasture and half bog, and he found soon that there were several ways across it both by land and by water, for he saw several persons passing along them. He lay upon the edge of the forest till dusk, when he crossed the marsh as he had seen the others do. There was no twilight, but the stars

gave him light enough to see by. He did not fear them now, though he could not love them.

The mound with the village was cut off from the marsh by a great pool. Across this ran a line of tree trunks set end to end instead of a bridge. Richard dared not follow this to the end; about half way along it he slipped into the water and, swimming and wading, made off to the right of the mound where he saw trees and bushes. Here he found a plantation of fruit trees where he appeased his hunger. Afterwards he found a canoe moored below some bushes and slept in it till dawn. Golden stars were reflected in the water, but they did not trouble him that night; he smelt the village smells, of dead fish and wood smoke and cooked food, and felt kindly towards these people; he began to believe that he should soon live among them. Nevertheless, he did not, at that time, seek their company, being withheld not so much by fear as by a kind of bashfulness; he would not face their cries and their astonished looks.

This bashfulness was conquered by his hunger. He lay all day among the bushes watching the black children playing by the water, listening to talk that he could not understand, to shouts and cries, broken songs, music from a harp strung with rushes. This was diversion enough for him, he desired no more, for he was weak from the poor diet of which he had lately partaken. In the afternoon he remarked that the smell of cooked food, which had floated round the village from the beginning, was growing stronger and more savoury. He resisted it

for as long as he was able, but at last he was constrained to climb up the bank, under cover of the bushes, to see from whence it came. Not six feet from him he saw a Negro woman pounding something in a mortar, while another stirred a great pot over the fire. He bore the sight for a while, but he could not bear the smell. He stood up and came to them out of the bushes. They shrieked and fled, while he took the pot off the fire and scooped out what it held with a great wooden ladle. Other women, with children and men too, poured out of the houses; they stood in a crowd a little way off and watched him eat. He ate slowly for all his rage of hunger, sitting on the ground with the spear between his knees. He saw now that he had acted like a madman; he had made them afraid and they might kill him for it, for he saw that some of their men were armed. He resolved not to give them more cause for fear by any sudden gesture; when he had finished all that was in the pot, (he could not tell what it was, but he thought that he had never tasted anything more rich and delicate,) he laid his Portuguese coin on the ground in payment, stood up, and went slowly down the hill by the way he had come, expecting at every step to feel a spear in his back. He swam very slowly across the lake, with all the Negroes watching him from the mound, and vanished from their eyes among the tall grasses of the marsh.

XVI

All that night fires blazed upon the mound and the drums were beaten till morning. The next day he twice came upon some of these people; once on two boys fishing in the marsh, and once, near the mound, on a woman drawing water. They all fled shrieking as soon as they saw him. He was uncertain what to do next, for the mound swarmed all day like an ant hill and all the next night there were drums and fires. Besides, the logs which had made a bridge over the water were some of them removed, as a drawbridge might be taken up in time of war. He supposed that they must take him for their enemy and intend to scare him away. He did not know how he might persuade them that he meant to do them no harm, for he met no more of them in the swamp. Near evening, in the thick bushes, he came upon a leopard. It glared at him with yellow eyes and then, as though it saw no enemy in him, glided on its way. After a pace or two it stopped, rolling on the ground and scratching itself like a great cat, as being not at all troubled by his presence. Mr. Carey was deeply troubled. He remembered what Aristotle says, that he who can live alone is either a beast or a God. He saw that he was already so much like a beast that men feared him and beasts did not. It was true that these people were barbarous heathen, but at least they had many things common to mankind, as fire, and houses, and the company of their

fellows. As for him, he was now no better than a leopard, prowling about their doors and feeding on raw fish, or on what he could steal out of their plantations.

He resolved one day to make an end of this unhappy way of life. He walked openly towards the village at the side farthest from the lake, where there was a fence with an opening for a gateway. Here a score of men, all armed, ran out to prevent him. He stuck his spear into the ground and went forward without it, intending to show them that he meant them no harm and wished only to come in among them. They pressed round him, all speaking at once, and he answered them with every African word that he could remember; but all seemed strange to them. At last they brought him out two or three grey-headed men whom he supposed to be their chiefs. These seemed to reason with him, urging him by their gestures to go back into the forest. He, refusing, showed them by signs that he was hungry and that he meant to come into their village. When this conference had lasted for a great while, they brought him a bowl of rice with a hen stewed in it; but, for all this piece of hospitality, as soon as he had finished eating they again urged him to be gone. He, having gained one point, would not throw away the other, the taste of that stewed hen putting him quite out of love with his hunter's diet. Understanding at last that he was perfectly resolved, the Negroes yielded and, after a long harangue from the gravest and oldest among them, brought him inside the fence, which was not a slight thing of sticks like the

fence round his hut in the beach village, but a long pile of thorny branches higher than a man. He slept that night in a hut on a grass mat as soundly as though he had lain in a four-post bed in Gloucester city.

Indeed, he could scarcely have been more secure. The people among whom he found himself were brave enough in the face of known dangers, but things unknown they dreaded; because he was a stranger, strange to them in face and colour as in the manner of his coming, they took him for a devil, or, at best, for an uncertain spirit. They dared not practise anything against him lest, by some charm, he should prevail against their weapons and turn these to their own hurt. Besides, they had another reason for saving him alive.

So, though they had at first tried to keep him out of their village, they afterwards pleased him as far as they were able; and he, who desired only to live at peace with them, was easily contented. Little by little they grew used to his company, though they did not have it continually since he often went away by himself for days together. He did not fear the forest as they did who had known it all their lives.

At other times he fished and hunted with their young men, or sat with them by the fires which they lighted at night to keep wild beasts from their cattle. He joined, too, in their friendly contests; not of spear throwing, (for he saw that he never could throw a spear as dexterously as those who had been trained to it since childhood,) but in a kind of quarterstaff play, and in wrestling, wherein

he far surpassed them all. But that which got him most reputation among them was his killing a leopard which, in full daylight and not far from the village, leapt out of some bushes upon one of their children. The leopards in this place being regarded with superstitious awe, as a kind of god, the Negroes were at first uncertain whether they ought not to blame him for this act; but, finding that the child recovered from its hurts and that no misfortune to the public followed, they supposed that his power must be greater than the leopard's and honoured him accordingly. He cured the leopard skin in the native fashion and afterwards wore it as a cloak. The teeth and claws he made into a necklace. These ornaments, with the rest of his dress (which was no more than a girdle of bark cloth and one or two pouches) would have seemed ridiculous enough in England, but his neighbours here thought them very fine.

As for him, he was satisfied with them. He had been born heir to a fair estate; he was now so poor that he had not a shirt to his back. He had once consorted with the famous wits of a capital city; he had now only the society of beasts and of savages as ignorant as they. He had been bred to the august profession of the Law, and he now herded cattle. Yet he did not repine, for, as these inconveniences were much less than others which he had endured, he esteemed himself happy, often comparing his state with that of the Arcadian shepherds which the poets celebrate. Indeed, the comparison was not unapt; as the people with whom he now lived were simple

and kindly, they were very idle also, drowsing in the shade for most of the day and having few cares beyond those which they took not to offend their spirits.

As soon as he could speak their language he inquired of them under what government they lived. They had never heard of Fida or of Ardra; the king they knew was the King of Great Benin, who ruled north, south and east, over the whole world as they conceived of it. Nevertheless, they were not subject to Benin but to another principality, smaller, as Mr. Carey inferred, but more warlike. Their prince they spoke of with a great deal of awe. He was a stranger, like Mr. Carey himself, a conqueror and a great magician. He had formerly stormed and taken their town and they still paid him a tribute : in fish, in cattle, in grain, and even in their own children, some of whom they were yearly forced to send to his capital. These children, when they were grown, served him, they said, as soldiers and concubines; he did not sacrifice them to his ancestors as the King of Benin had done when he was their governor. They supposed that such a person might have no ancestors, or at least that these would not dwell in spirit land where his slaves could follow them. That he had power with spirits they knew, for the harvests had been good in his time and there had been no great sickness. They called him by many names : the Father, the Chief, the Bright One, the Spotted One, the Crocodile Slayer. They had a hundred miracles to tell of him. In all their talk of him there was very little that Mr. Carey could either believe

or understand; only he heard enough to be sure that this could not be the same person as Ezekiel Boone. If this was not Ezekiel he did not fear him; he thought that God would never suffer two such monsters to afflict the world.

XVII

He was not left for ever in doubt about this ruler. Once, when he had been fishing all day, he came home after sunset to find more noise in the village than was common. He supposed that the thorn bush which served the villagers as a gate would be already drawn across the entrance, so he went in by the back way, mooring his canoe to a post and climbing the side of the mount. When he was up, he found the place a-swarm with people, who crowded round him staring as if they saw him for the first time, though most of them were his familiar acquaintances. They brought him into their largest courtyard, which he found full of soldiers with helmets of crocodile skin. They were all Negroes, but he who sat in the midst of them, in a great wooden chair of state, was not a Negro.

Mr. Carey saw a square black beard spread out upon a glittering doublet, a face that was not black but purple, and small, darting choleric eyes under a steeple crowned hat looped up in front with a jewel. But for the eyes, Richard might have thought that he was looking at an image.

The black beard opened and asked him what he did there, speaking a bastard Portuguese, the common language of the Coast, served up with a sauce of English oaths, all very odd and old-fashioned.

Mr. Carey perceived that this was the lord of whom

the Negroes stood so much in awe. What manner of man he was there was no telling; but that a devil of pride possessed him appeared in his port and behaviour. Whatever he might be, Mr. Carey was entirely in his power; for he had left his spear in the canoe and carried no more in his hand than a string of fish. With this he courteously advanced, replying in the same Coast language that he was an Englishman lost in the forest, who had strayed by chance into that principality. He hoped that he had been so happy as to fall into the hands of a fellow countryman.

The other replied that he must give a better account of himself, inquiring whether he were not some rascally Leveller or Republican.

Richard, overjoyed at this, confessed how lately he had escaped from their cruelty and briefly related his story. Here he acted too rashly, not remembering that the Crocodile Slayer might have slaves of his own, and that though he loved Monarchy he must certainly hate a runaway. This unhappily proving true, he received Mr. Carey's communication very coldly, seeming to doubt what part of it he should believe. Before they had finished with questions and answers, Mr. Carey remarked on another European who stood in the shadow behind the great chair. He looked twice and saw Accepted Harrison.

He had not thought of Harrison for a great while; he had half forgotten that there was such a person and supposed at first that his sight deceived him. But he could

not mistake the green eyes and the lean, small body; and he did not doubt that Harrison knew him. Again he spoke rashly: "As for my name, Sir, it is Richard Carey; and here I see a gentleman who knows me well. He can tell you that I speak the truth."

Harrison moved back farther behind the Shining One, but there was no faintness in his voice; even while Richard was transported with fury by the sense of his words, his ears were half ravished by their melodious sound; not since he left England had he heard his own language so choicely spoken: "In truth, my Lord Hannibal, I know this man well. I wonder at his confidence in claiming me here as his acquaintance. This is Calibut Downing, the notorious pirate."

Lord Hannibal stood up, swearing in two or three languages. Mr. Carey began to protest. But he was encompassed with soldiers all very well armed and only less strong than himself; a blow from a cudgel laid him on the ground. When the Shining Chief left the village the next day, Richard was sent on before him as a prisoner.

They met again before he set out. Lord Hannibal sat under a tree with his guards in attendance and the villagers applauding him. In the daylight his beard was seen to be dyed; and his purple face might have been dyed too, it was of so uniform and bright a colour. The jewel in his hat was a transcendent emerald and his doublet, a short doublet with great sleeves like those worn in Queen Elizabeth's time, was sewn thick with gold and silver lace. But the lace was tarnished, the rents

patched with old shreds, the embroideries eked out with shells and such trifles. His wide satin breeches were faded, his shoe roses draggled, and he wore no stockings at all. He looked like a thing set up to scare crows. Mr. Harrison, in a grey French suit a little the worse for the climate, was a courtier beside him. Mr. Carey addressed himself to the scarecrow. He said that he was an innocent man, and that if he came to any harm among them his murderers would be assuredly punished either in this world or the next. Lord Hannibal blinked his little boar's eyes and Harrison bade the soldiers take their prisoner away.

He was put into a canoe with five or six guards, some of the villagers following him to the water's edge. They did him no harm but, on the contrary, brought him presents and begged him not to blame them for what had happened, as though they supposed that his fortunes might mend and give him the power to avenge himself. The guards, too, used him very civilly. Their captain was one Mataion, a tall dexterous Negro, with a bronze bell hung about his neck and a great many waist cloths of different colours folded neatly one above the other.

They brought him to another village, a small, poor place on low ground with its crops half rotting in the damp air. Here his leopard skin and his necklace of teeth were taken from him, and again he found himself condemned to wear a chain. Yet his condition was not intolerable, for the Negroes, and especially Mataion, detested Harrison, whom they knew to be his chief enemy.

Mr. Carey himself had raged against Harrison ; but now that he had time to consider the matter, he could not tell what to think. He began to doubt the justice of his own indignation. He saw that his trunk and his limbs were scarred and blackened, and conceived of the notion that his face too might have changed so that Harrison could truly not have known it. He studied his reflection in a well and was amazed by it. He had not looked in a glass since his leaving England; and he was a boy then, and was counted handsome. No friend could call him handsome now. His hair was bleached and matted and he had a beard that was bleached and matted too. His eyes were narrow now, with the lids drooping over them, his mouth was thin and his nose a polished hook, his cheeks and his forehead were hollow, scarred and puckered. When he saw his own face, like a drowned monster, staring up at him from the oily water, he could not at first believe that it was his. He fancied that the light was playing him a trick and went to other wells and pools for a new reflection. Then he remembered how often he had seen it over the side of his canoe; but he had not remarked on it in those days; until he saw Harrison he did not compare it with the face that he had worn before. The face that he wore now might have been a pirate's for all that he could tell to the contrary.

He believed that Harrison was not incapable of disowning him for some crooked reason; he never had heard how the rogue left Gloucester, but supposed that

he had bought his freedom with some prime secret from the faction that was still in love with Massey. But for all Harrison's crimes in Gloucester, Mr. Carey did not choose to lay this new piece of treason at his door until he had tried him further. Until he had tried him he was content to wait, to eat the best food which the village afforded, to hear his guards exchanging histories in a tongue which he now understood very well, and to learn how to throw those mancala beans which are the cards and dice of that part of the country.

His fame as a wrestler was not forgotten. It reached the ears of his new master who, coming one day to the village, ordered him to try a fall with one of his body-guard. Richard acquitted himself so well, though hampered by his chain, that the Shining One was enchanted, resolving to match him with some notable champions who were to meet in a neighbouring town upon the next feast day. To this end he commanded that the prisoner should be brought to his house.

Of this house, or capital city, (for it was indeed the head of a principality,) Mr. Carey had heard much; Mataion and his fellows were never weary of praising its splendours. Mr. Carey could not picture these splendours to himself; the most he would believe was that it stood by the river in a clearing not very far away. But when he saw the width and height of its red mud walls his unbelief was shaken.

The wet season had begun again and the clearing round them was deep in mire. He and the men with

him crossed this mire upon the trunks of trees which had been dragged there to make a kind of barbarous causeway. By this causeway was a score of vultures tearing at the body of a calf; others, great as turkeys, sat upon the islands of filth and offal. The bones of animals were strewn here and there, and of men too, for he saw a man's rib bones protruding from a slimy pool. The walls showed no sign of any life behind them. They had no windows in them. Only, from the middle of the house, a column of smoke rose up.

There was a gateway, too low for a grown man to pass through it without stooping. In the shadow of the gateway Mr. Carey stopped and looked back. It was nearly sunset; the pools were full of light, and the edge of the forest was like a shining cliff. Palm leaves glittered in the sun and a flight of parrots, bright as jewels, shot across the end of the clearing. He heard them shriek like starlings, but more harshly, and a chill fell upon his heart. He thought that he might never come out that way again until his bones, too, were thrown to the vultures.

XVIII

WHEN he was inside the house he found that (like others in that country) it was built with several courtyards, and galleries round them, and small chambers opening from the galleries. He was taken through some of these galleries to the principal court, where he was chained to a pillar. Such was the common fate of prisoners; but, while other prisoners were left in an outer court, he was brought into the best of all, where he had for his companions the chief councillors and soldiers of the principality. These all slept upon a mud ledge that ran round the wall, for the chambers were only used as granaries and store houses. Mr. Carey could not reach the ledge, but he had a bed to lie upon and a blanket to defend him from the damp air.

At one end of the court the gallery was very broad, its thatch being supported by a double row of pillars. Here, with Lord Hannibal's chair and his table, were his rare birds, his animals and his state treasure. Here were his leopards of mortised ivory, their spots artificially wrought in bronze, and his bronze lamp, high as a man's shoulder, with a dish at the top of it to hold wick and oil. Here, too, were his elephants' teeth, each set in a monstrous head hewn out of ironwood. The pillars of this gallery were hung with plates of bronze on which men and animals were moulded in relief.

Mr. Carey came to know all these things very well,

for Mataion and the others delighted in showing them to him that he might understand their master's wealth and glory. The Shining One himself did not often come to the lower end of the court, and Harrison, who still affected to think Mr. Carey a pirate, passed by with scornful and malicious looks. Richard perceived that he had no remedy but patience; he lay all day upon his bed and watched the rainwater streaming off the thatch into the middle of the courtyard, where there was a pipe to carry it away. From time to time the pipe choked and the flood rose and came into the gallery. The soldiers and councillors never concerned themselves with it, for they too were a patient people. They trusted that the pipe would be cleared by the force of the water (which commonly happened sooner or later) and went about their business walking upon that same mud platform which served them all for bed, chair and table. Lord Hannibal had a fine bronze footstool to keep his feet from the wet, but Mr. Carey, who saw him splashing through it barefoot with a page behind him to carry his shoes, supposed that he minded it no more than the others did.

Next in authority to Harrison was a Portuguese from Loanda, who was styled Master of the Horse, though indeed there never had been a horse in the place, except one that died before Mr. Carey's time. This man, who was called Domingo, had been forced to leave his native city through having accidentally killed a man there. He was courteous, mild and reasonably honest, and was

of infinite use to his master, for he wrote a fair hand and knew a little Latin, the language in which this prince (who did not himself understand it) was accustomed to couch his proclamations.

Lord Hannibal, who commonly called himself Don Hannibal, held his country partly by conquest and partly by patents from King James of England and from the King of Portugal. He called his house Carthage, thinking himself to be descended from the Punic general and judging, from some ruins that he found there, that it stood upon the site of the old illustrious city. All this Mr. Carey learnt from Domingo, who had himself seen the patents and knew the box in which they were kept. He learnt, too, that though this Hannibal had been a valiant captain in his youth, his wealth and power had declined, so that Carthage, with its three tributary villages, was only saved from attack by the marshes that surrounded it and by the peaceable temper of the people of Great Benin.

As for Harrison, he had come there about a year before from the neighbouring town of Arebo. There no more was known of him than that a servant of the Dutch factor's had found him in a mangrove swamp, drifting in a boat with two dead men as his companions. He declared that he had come upon a trading venture with a good cargo of knives, aqua vitæ, Anabasses cotton and serges of the kind called Perpetuanas, that ship and cargo had been taken by pirates and he himself barbarously treated. Domingo dared not confess that he doubted the

truth of this story, but Richard easily perceived that he did not wholly believe in it. He himself could not tell what to think. Waking one night, when the soldiers slept upon their ledge with their heads wrapped up in cloths and skins, he watched Don Hannibal play at chess. He saw him through the mist and plashing of the court, set in his chair like a painted image with the light of his tall lamp flickering across him. On a stool near by sat Accepted Harrison, one leg drawn up under him and his elbow on his knee. His face hanging over the chess board was in shadow; it was that of a stone devil upon Gloucester tower. Richard knew very well that he was a stony devil in his heart.

He came soon to believe that Harrison did not mean him to survive until the wrestling match, and that the Shining One understood this perfectly; for, as though to guard against his champion's being poisoned, Don Hannibal caused him to be furnished every day with malaget and roasted yams from his own table. Indeed, Richard saw by many signs that this prince and his chief subject did not live together in unity.

It was a part of Harrison's duty to play at chess with Don Hannibal. They often quarrelled over the board, since, though nobody was ever born with a better will to be a hypocrite, Harrison could never rule his tongue. He had come to Carthage as a beggar and was wholly a creature of this Hannibal's, but his swelling and contentious spirit broke all bounds. Besides, he had his own employments and was not always to be found, so that

the Shining One was left swearing over his idle chess men; for Domingo, through excessive timidity, was the worst player in the world and the Carthaginians could not master so intricate a science.

One day Don Hannibal thought of his prisoner and, finding that he knew something of the game, began to play with him. It was hard play for Mr. Carey. Some of the chess men had been lost or spoilt and, instead of them, were others cut by Negro workmen after their own fancies, so that no stranger could tell king from castle or castle from pawn; especially since Don Hannibal, who could not bear to be defeated, sometimes changed their names between two moves. Though he would not be defeated, he did not choose to win without a struggle, and he was, besides, a careless player. Once or twice Richard so nearly won that he could only save himself by a transparent blunder; but presently he did better, till the Shining One began to boast of his pupil.

The chess board was painted on the table in squares of red and black. Its lines were drawn crooked and the table itself was no credit to the carpenter who made it. The chair was of neater workmanship; though its legs had been partly eaten away by white ants and were supported, to make them even, on balls of baked clay. Above the table, a little precious ape sat in a bronze ring hanging from a rafter, and round about, on rings and perches or in small cages fastened to the pillars, were parrots and other birds with gay coloured feathers. Not less gorgeous was Don Hannibal. He wore, at all times, silk

or scarlet cloth patched with shreds of stuff brighter than itself, and garnished, for want of jewels, with scraps of tin and broken glass, which gave him the look of a figure at a fair or of a jackdaw set off with its pickings. He wore this dress out of policy, knowing that his Negroes esteemed magnificence far above neatness and that glass and jewels were all one to them. Like their God he sat in the midst of them, chewing kola nut, or drinking palm wine from his ivory cup, settling the quarrels that broke out among them and listening to his musicians who, to harps strung with rushes, sang of his old wars against the King of Benin, and of how he slew the magic crocodile who had been their God before he came there.

Yet was he not exempt from mortal griefs. Once he told Mr. Carey with tears of rage that Harrison, like a black-hearted villain, made love to two or three of his wives. This was quite true, and the less to be wondered at since, as prince, he had impressed every woman in Carthage into his seraglio. Mr. Carey was not a little disconcerted by this confidence, but he answered so prudently that the other was well pleased, swearing in his antique fashion that he was certain now Mr. Carey never had been that thing which Harrison had called him.

Richard, finding himself absolved from the charge of piracy, begged to be allowed his freedom, or, at least, such moderate degree of exercise as might keep him in health for the wrestling. Don Hannibal refused both these requests; he had set his heart upon the wrestling,

and believed that only chains would keep a man who, on his own confession, had already given one master the slip. He ordered instead that, to increase his strength, the champion should eat a whole boiled kid every day, with a double allowance of millet—a thing which Richard never could achieve.

The chief benefit that he received at this time was through the enmity of Harrison. The Negroes had a superstitious notion that his chief strength lay in his iron collar. Harrison, intending by all means to destroy his reputation with them, soon procured that this collar should be taken off him. Thus, by means of a person who laboured only to do him harm, he was freed at last from the badge of his old servitude. The wounds that it had rubbed in his neck were suffered to heal and he could forget that he had worn it, except that ever afterwards he carried his neck a little awry.

The wrestling match was held at Arebo, a town about ten miles away upon another branch of the river. The Carthaginians set out in two great canoes. In the first was Accepted Harrison, with the musicians and some of the soldiers. The next carried Lord Hannibal, his chair, his bodyguard and his shield bearers, besides a leopard cub and other rare beasts which he took with him as a mark of state. Richard lay in the bows of this canoe. Across the heads of the rowers he saw the Prince of Carthage, like King Hiram of Tyre with his apes and his peacocks. The forest was full of mist, and a fog lay upon the water. Don Hannibal beginning to nod and

drowse, the musicians in the first boat were silenced. The very flies were quiet in the heat, so that Richard could hear nothing but the dipping of the paddles and the water lapping at the prow. Hearing these sounds, and feeling the smooth and pleasant motion, he fell into a great calm. He remembered that, as the canoe hung upon the river, so did the river, and its banks, and the round world hang in the hollow of a mighty hand. He knew that not a leaf could fall in the forest, nor could any creature die there, except its end had been decreed before the sun and moon were created. Thinking of these things, he neither regretted what was past nor feared what was to come.

It was dark before they reached Arebo. Their torches cast flickering shadows in among the tree trunks and great bats came out of the shadows to hurl themselves against the torch bearers. The Carthaginians sang and shouted that they might drive off evil spirits and the musicians beat upon their drums.

At the landing stage they were met by a multitude of people, Arebo being a considerable town for that part of the world. The wrestling was held upon the outskirts of it, in a grove accounted holy by the Negroes. The Bini lords rode there, sitting sideways on their small led horses, with servants to bear up their wrists, which were loaded with great bands of coral. Don Hannibal, having no horse, was carried through the press in his chair, his soldiers running before him with his musicians and the keepers of his beasts. He alone had a leopard

in his train; for leopards being sacred to the King of Benin, no subject of his could presume to keep one.

On the wrestling ground was a great concourse of people, with a few foreigners, as the Dutch factor and one or two merchants. The rest were Negroes. Amongst them were the Viceroy of the King of Great Benin, the Are de Roes, or street kings, and the mercadors and fiadors who are the brokers of the country. All these, being considerable people, sat in a kind of state according to their degrees; for they all wore the necklace of glazed coctile earth, like speckled red marble, delivered by the king to his officers and so sacred that the penalty for losing it is death.

The ground was lit with torches and bundles of dry faggots that flared up to the trees in wafts of smoke and sparks. The Negroes encompassed it, squatting upon the ground after their fashion. But for some beads and other ornaments they were naked from the waist up. Their brows were scarred with hot irons and the hair of some of them was dyed a lemon colour, as though they would not be content with the devil's livery but must make themselves more frightful still. There were many musicians. Some sat upon the ground and beat their drums, which they make of an excavated tree trunk covered at one end with a sheepskin. Some played upon iron bells or upon harps strung with rushes. Some made an extravagant noise blowing on horns of elephants' teeth. Thus to the flames and to faces fit for Hell were added sounds truly diabolic.

The champions, their great bodies shining with oil, were in the space in the midst of the people. Three were pre-eminent among them, two Benin men and a Negro from an inland tribe who was a slave of the Viceroy's. The Benin men were free; for the Bini, being all distinguished by the title of King's Slaves, might never be enslaved by any other person.

As soon as his chain had been knocked off, Mr. Carey was put with the wrestlers, and when the people saw how lean he was and wasted they supposed that he could never prevail against the least of the three. But the spirit of the Lord was upon him, and he overcame them all one by one.

Then was brought against him an old fat man reputed a magician. Him Mr. Carey took up gently in his arms and laid upon the ground. After that no Negro would wrestle with him.

Don Hannibal, rejoicing greatly, embraced him tenderly and kissed him on both cheeks, swearing that, whatever crimes might be laid to his charge, his life should be safe at Carthage and that he should exercise there the same authority as the Are de Roes did in Benin. He further presented him with an embroidered coat for the enhancement of his dignity.

XIX

MR. CAREY gladly received the authority, but he would not wear the coat, for though it had once been very fine it was not clean enough to please him. He contented himself with the common dress of the poorer Europeans : a coarse shirt and a pair of breeches.

He was equal in place now with Accepted Harrison, who received him with a show of frankness. 'Well, Dick,' said he, 'since Dick Carey you now must be; I was troubled at your coming, for I am a quiet man and do not love changes, but I will confess to you that there is enough here for two, if the two can live together in religious charity."

But Richard saw that there was not enough for two, when one of the two was Harrison.

Don Hannibal could not live without a steward, for he was too old to bear alone the cares of his principality. Harrison had wit enough for a greater business, but he had not enough patience to govern his wit; it overflowed in twenty busy schemes and foamed up in a hundred sharp sayings. The schemes troubled Don Hannibal, who hated changes as much as Harrison professed to hate them. The sharp sayings pricked him, he could not tell where. His own wit had lain in doing, not in speaking. He thought his steward mocked him, and he could not tell how. Harrison trusted in the smooth side of his tongue to repair those breaches which the rough side

might make. Here he deceived himself; his compliments were too fine for a common understanding, his plasters enlarged the wounds they were designed to heal. Mr. Carey soon perceived this. He saw too that Don Hannibal, though he wore the airs of an absolute prince, was afraid of his imperious servant, being not fit now to contend with him.

What bred most of their contentions was that Harrison could not refrain from diverting himself with Don Hannibal's wives. All his wives had their lovers; for, though some of them were very honest women, they could not feel themselves bound to him as to an ordinary husband, believing as they did that he was a demon, a being quite apart from human kind. Don Hannibal must have known this if he had chosen to think of it; but he chose not to think of it. Besides, it hurt his pride to share them with his countryman, as with one capable of understanding the injury he suffered. Because he could not face a quarrel, he did not speak of this openly to Harrison; his indignation broke out in fleers and side glances.

Harrison saw his danger; he knew that it was increased by Richard's coming, and that his best hope of safety was to entangle his rival with him in the same sin. He foresaw that this might be hard, Mr. Carey being perpetually enslaved by such words as gratitude and hospitality. He found it impossible. Richard had no need of scruples to guard him against such a snare; he was afraid of women. He thought, with many other philosophers, that black or white they were all alike at heart; having suffered so

much from Phillida, he would not give another of her sex the smallest power over him.

Mr. Harrison, perceiving his insensibility, was filled with despair; he took it for a presage of his own ruin. The first-fruits of this despair was a small deadly snake which Richard found one night in his bed. He could not attribute its presence there to any special malignity; it might have fallen from the rafters, where, with squirrels, mice and other small creatures, it would have company enough. Next day he was sitting under a wall whose top, though it had no regular cornice, overhung the bottom. This overhanging top suddenly fell in a torrent of beams, mud and adobe bricks. He himself was not hurt, but a man sitting near him was half killed. Soon afterwards, while he was walking by the river, a spear flew out of some bushes and lodged in a tree trunk so near his head that one of the barbs grazed his cheek. By these various accidents he was persuaded that either he or Harrison must leave Carthage.

He considered whether he should leave it or not. In England there was no place for him. Oliver Cromwell was Lord Protector, and those of the Cavalier party who had not made their peace with him were exiles and broken men. Christopher Baugh might help him again; but Christopher seemed now part of a dream rather than of his waking life. Besides, Mr. Carey had no wish to make his peace in England; he had a singular work of retribution to perform there, but he judged that the times were not ripe for it.

Outside England the whole world was open to him. He had youth, strength and some dexterity; he knew that in every nation under the sun there was a market for these commodities. Especially at the courts of the various principalities were there bidders for the kind of dexterity which he possessed. He saw the world spread out as in a map: Europe, where in every camp and city he would find his brother cavaliers, Asia, with its peacock thrones and jewelled elephants, and that vast continent upon whose rim he dwelt. He saw the world as he had known it in his boyhood, when he read Hakluyt's *Voyages*: in the days when, with Drake, he had doubled Cape Horn, or adventured with Willoughby into the frozen seas. These visions had been emptied of delight by his passion for Phillida; for a time all delight had centred in her. Now they filled him with an intolerable weariness. As a boy he had longed to see strange beasts and birds, strange cities filled with men unlike the men he knew : to eat strange foods, and smell new scents, and play a part in marvellous adventures. As a man, he had seen stranger things than the boy had dreamt of; but he was out of love with strangeness, he wanted the place and the people he was used to. In a world where there still might be marble cities, he had found Carthage, a hovel on a mud bank. Here he ate food that he had learnt to relish and slept under a roof whose rafters he now knew tolerably well. Here were people whose faces he knew, whose language he had learnt to understand, and with whose laws he was becoming familiar. Here, not without toil, he had won a

little reputation. Here was a prince who was certainly mad and most likely a villain, but for whose person he had begun to conceive a kind of affection. Here, in brief, was the refuge appointed for him; he believed that he could not leave it without committing a piece of ungodly presumption.

He did not forget that it was also Harrison's refuge and that Harrison had reached it first; but for his part he could live at peace with Harrison. He only resolved that, if one of them must leave Carthage, that one should not be he.

As for the attempts on his life, he would not, at first, complain of them to Don Hannibal, foreseeing that this could only lead to the punishment of some innocent person. He resolved for the present to eat only what Harrison ate and to drink out of his cup, to change his bed for the common ledge and to sleep near those Negroes who seemed most his friends, and never to walk in the forest unarmed. Such precautions, if they could not wholly secure him, must, he thought, absolve him from the sin of rashness.

While he was still observing them, there came to Carthage a certain Negro merchant, a Brassman from the south-east. This person came from a country whose people, though they esteemed the King of Benin as their Pope, were not bound by the same laws as the Benin men. The Bini were forbidden to travel by water, they were not so much traders as husbandmen; the Brassmen were bold and free traders and their roads were the rivers. The

richest of them all was this trader, Mundoo. He had travelled far into Africa dealing even with the Arabecks, or Barbary merchants, but the chief part of his business was with the Europeans on the coast. He exchanged gold, slaves and ivory for salt, knives, velvet and Colchester baize.

He came with four large canoes and a shoal of small ones, all well stuffed with slaves, women, merchandise, soldiers and musicians. Most of his people encamped in the clearing, where, since the rains were over, the mud was baked clean and hard. He himself, with some of his servants, was lodged in the inner court; and here Mr. Carey first saw him, a man as tall as himself and broader, with wide nostrils and a countenance black as that of any of his fellows, which expressed more than common wit and boldness.

Don Hannibal received him with extraordinary ceremony. When they had split a kola nut and had each partaken of it, according to the custom of the country, they sat down to drink palm wine laced with brandy, Mundoo upon the bed that had once been Richard's and was now embellished with a piece of torn damask. They drank all night. Mundoo sang the songs of his country, and Don Hannibal sang a song too, a thing of Queen Elizabeth's time. His voice was cracked, and he forgot the tune, and Richard thought that the Negroes mocked him. He himself did not sit with them; he had enough to do in seeing the commonalty fed, in allaying the quarrels that grew fierce when they were drunk,

and in restraining Domingo who, half distracted, would have destroyed their whole stock of fowls and goats, leaving none for the time when the Brassmen had departed.

Accepted Harrison was a better courtier. He would not sing, but he could suit himself to his company. He spoke the common language of the Coast and had a vein of stories more fit for a pagan to hear than for a Christian to tell. Coming upon them early in the evening, Richard surprised the three in some deep conference. They turned their eyes upon him, and he saw triumph in Harrison's and a kind of confusion in Don Hannibal's. Afterwards brandy drowned all. When the first cocks were crowing, he found the drinkers snoring on the floor. Only Mundoo was still awake. The scarlet cloth coat he had got from the traders was flung off for heat; he sat upright on the bed, black and shining, with twenty strings of beads on his neck and a leopard skin round his waist. He was singing in his throat like a cat, while he lifted Don Hannibal's ivory cup very slowly to his lips. The lamp, which had been filled three times that night, was low again; it cast his monstrous, leaping shadow on the wall. He held out the cup to Richard, but Richard would not humour him; he was wearied out with hospitality. He picked up Don Hannibal and laid him on the platform with a blanket over him. Then he went down to the river bank to smell the clean decay of mud and water.

XX

MUNDOO parted from Don Hannibal at last with courteous embraces and the exchange of gifts. Don Hannibal's gifts were trifling things, but Mundoo gave him five rolls of silk and a flintlock of good workmanship. The barrel was pricked out in arabesque, the stock was of ivory with cupids and centaurs cut upon it in relievo after the Italian fashion. It was an old piece, but though it seemed at first less fit for use than for show, Mr. Carey judged it to be the best weapon that had ever come to Carthage. He wondered at this princely trader who took so little and gave so much for it.

After Mundoo had gone, Mr. Carey felt a change in the air. Harmattan was blowing, the dry wind of the swamps. The Carthaginians grew moody and quarrelsome, their skins were parched, their nostrils choked with dust. Don Hannibal played no more chess; he sat shrivelled in his chair, watching his Negroes throw mancala beans on to a mud table set full of holes. In general he liked this game; now he had nothing for any creature except rebukes and curses. His kindness for Mr. Carey had vanished, he seemed resolved to pick a quarrel with him. Mr. Carey protested at last. He said that he had come to Carthage freely and peaceably, to claim that protection which the Law of Nations allowed to a stranger; that he had been extremely abused there, being condemned for a crime which, as Don Hannibal well understood, he

never had committed; that, after the wrestling, Don Hannibal had made him many promises, and especially of safety in life and limb. He then related the several practices which had been used against him. Don Hannibal seemed confused by these reproaches. He promised that any guilty person who was named to him should be brought to justice. He declared that these attempts, of which Mr Carey complained, had been made without his knowledge and against his express command. He swore upon his faith as a prince that they never should be repeated.

If Don Hannibal had known nothing of the business, Mr. Carey found it very strange that he could make such a promise; and yet he believed in his heart that the old prince was honest, after his own fashion. He treated Richard now with more civility, but without his old frankness, speaking to him little and not looking much his way; only, when Mr. Carey turned suddenly, he sometimes surprised secret glances from the small red eyes.

Mr. Harrison, on the other hand, grew extremely kind. He vowed that he had quite mistaken his old friend; that, truly believing Richard to be dead, he had not thought to see him rise again in such a shape. His professions of friendship gave Mr. Carey more uneasiness than the other's coldness. If he was not to be murdered, he supposed that some other bargain had been struck between them. He learnt the terms of this bargain from Mataion: Hannibal had sold him to the Brassman.

Again he considered whether he should not leave Carthage while he had time. There was a Dutch ship at

Arebo; he could reach her in half a day. But the weariness of much travel still oppressed him; he did not want to reach that ship. He might sail in her to Holland and join the plotters at The Hague. He might join Prince Rupert's squadron as a volunteer. He might enlist in some foreign service, or really turn pirate at last. Wherever he went he foresaw for himself new hardships and intolerable labours. At the end of them all he might find himself no better off than he was now in Carthage. As for helping the Cause, he judged that to be impossible; nothing but a Special Providence could set the king upon his throne again.

He sauntered on the bank behind the palace, along that path which his own feet had made. He had it to himself because it was supposed to be haunted by a spirit. The trees at the water's edge made a kind of twilight, though their leaves were shrivelled at this season. Their trunks were blackened on the landward side, for the undergrowth here was cleared with fire to save the labour of cutting it. The palace wall was blank, but for a few loopholes choked up with weeds. It was partly of mud and partly of those hewn stones which Don Hannibal supposed to be the relics of Dido's city. It was strengthened with twelve great beams of wood set upon their ends and carved at the top with monstrous heads. Some of them were no more than stumps, having been eaten away by white ants. One of these stumps was a god; there was often a handful of yams, or the entrails of a fowl, lying at the foot of it.

The heads and the wall itself were filmed now with

dust. The branches of the trees were like snakes turned to stone, and a mist hung upon the river. The water made no sound at all, but that one small eddy swirled round a root. In the palace a drum was beating, very slowly and evenly. Palace and river were waiting for the end of Harmattan; Mr. Carey could wait for it too. This was the appointed place where he should wait for it. As at Pepito, when he had wished to escape, so now at Carthage, when he wished to remain, he believed that his wishes were God's commandments planted in his heart. As for Harrison and his wishes, he saw very well that they did not come from God at all.

Two days later Don Hannibal sent for him. Mr. Carey found him sitting quite alone, except for a musician who crouched at his feet thrumming on a gourd strung with iron slats. He did not speak, and Mr. Carey sat down on the mud ledge to wait for what should happen.

The sun was setting in the mist, it dropped behind the roof like a swarm of crimson bees. The air, full of fine dust, was crimson too; Don Hannibal sat in a bath of blood, and his glittering coat glowed like a coal. The Negro player squatted with his head thrown back; his teeth and eyeballs and the keys of his instrument were dyed with the same stain.

After sunset came Domingo with a great bowl of Pardon wine. Don Hannibal called to Mr. Carey and bade him drink it. There was a secret disorder in his looks, and a kind of entreaty in Domingo's as though he would have spoken had he dared.

Richard, looking about him, saw a wild ape posturing on the thatch against the western sky. Going towards it to the edge of the gallery, so that his back was turned to Don Hannibal, he made it a mock reverence; and, as though in jest, to do it honour, emptied his wine to the dregs. He did not pour that wine down his gullet, but down the front of his shirt, very carefully, lest Domingo and his master should hear it splash. There was no great danger of their hearing it, for the musician thrummed all the while upon his gourd as in a drowsy kind of ecstasy.

He did not lie that night upon the platform, but in a hammock slung between two pillars, which Don Hannibal had given him. He went to it early, staggering a little as though his drink had been stronger than he bargained for. He got into it clumsily and lay with his eyes shut, breathing heavily through his mouth. Now that it was dark he fancied that the court was fuller than usual. The people in it were very quiet; he heard a whisper, the padding of bare feet, the brushing of a waistcloth against a wall. He had never felt less inclined to sleep; his legs itched as though there were ants running over them, and some living creature, a spider, or, as he thought, a scorpion, fell upon him from a beam and crawled across his body. He dared not move because he believed that all Carthage was listening to his breathing. He thought how ill a thing it was for a man to lie defenceless in a hammock, with his whole body exposed to every weapon. He wished that he had had a tree at his back and not a web of cotton cloth. He wondered if Mataion had not been bought by

Harrison; or, at least, if his judgment had not been at fault. He lay quite still breathing through his mouth.

Presently he broke into a great sweat; he felt the drops trickling down his sides.

After a long while lights shone upon his eyelids, and the whispering grew louder. Feet shuffled round him, a hand touched him gently. He felt a rope passed over his body and wound round the hammock; but loosely, as though those that bound him trusted to the strength of the potion. He lay still and breathed quietly; he dared not look out between his eyelids, lest the glitter of his eyes should betray him.

The hammock was lifted at each end, it was carried through the air. One of his bearers stumbled, and he felt his shoulder strike against the wall. They were in the second court; he knew it by the smell of onions and stinking fish. In the outermost court beasts were slain; he knew the smell of that too. He felt his hammock lowered to pass through the outer gateway. Again a bearer stumbled; and he remembered that the Romans counted such a thing unlucky. He did not know whether the ill-fortune should be for him or for those that sent him.

Dust blew across the clearing; Mr. Carey, whose ears were tuned to small noises, heard it rattle upon the sides of his hammock like fine hail. It drifted over his face and into his nostrils. He knew from the wavering light across his eyelids that the flames of the torches were blown sideways.

They left the clearing and came into the forest by a narrow path. Dry, trailing creepers brushed the sides of the hammock, the bearers grunted and stumbled at every step. They were horribly afraid because, lest they should wake him, they had left behind them those square bells which they usually wore to drive away snakes and evil spirits. Mr. Carey felt their fear and shared it. His fear was not of snakes or of spirits, but of plain murder. He mastered it. His reason told him that Don Hannibal would not, for honour's sake, be a party to his murder. He was a party to this, so there could be no murder intended. If murder was done, that could only be through Harrison's treachery; and he had not yet appeared in the business.

There was a smell of river mud and the musky odour of crocodiles. Richard heard Mr. Harrison's voice asking the headman, in the Portuguese dialect, why he was so long bringing the rascal. The bearers laid the hammock on the ground and Harrison came and stooped over it.

Harrison saw his danger and sprang back too late; his thoughts worked faster than his limbs. Richard, whose thoughts and limbs moved together, slipped out of his bonds like a python and threw his arms round Harrison's thighs. Harrison, when he bent over the hammock, had had his hand on the pistol in his belt. He pressed the trigger as he fell. Happily for him it missed fire, or the ball would have gone through his own body. He lay on the ground with Richard upon him and the Negroes squatting round them in a circle. He swore at the headman

in Portuguese, faintly, because he was out of breath. The Negroes laughed at him. They believed that all Europeans were devils; but they liked Mr. Carey because he was tall and a wrestler, and because he could speak their language, and they hated Harrison because he was little and crooked and mocked them in ways which they could not understand. Only Mataion had dared to help Richard, but they were all glad that he was the stronger. The torchbearers held their flares carefully so that he might see what he was about.

Harrison lay with his eyes shut and both Richard's knees on his chest. Presently, 'Richard, you hurt me,' said he.

Mr. Carey shifted his weight and said nothing. He knew that Harrison would not be silent for long.

'I swear, Richard,' said Mr. Harrison, 'upon my honour, there was no design to murder you.'

'You carried me here for my health?'

'For your health. It was thought that a little short voyage——'

'To England; to be hanged there?' asked Mr. Carey. He knew very well that there was no such plan; he was not afraid of being hanged in England. But, as he spoke, he remembered what it was that he had truly feared, both in the courtyard and in the clearing. He had not dared to put a name to it then; he understood it now. He sweated again, till the great drops rolled off his forehead. He dug his knees into Harrison without thinking of him at all.

Harrison gasped with pain. 'Richard: for mercy's sake! No, not to England. I swear it! Mundoo was to fetch you.'

Mr. Carey moved a little and licked his lips. 'To Pepito?' he asked. He looked at Harrison sideways.

Harrison observed his disorder. He could be curious even at the brink of the grave. 'I do not know Pepito. Who is he? He has a bird's name.'

Mr. Carey thought, 'If he knew Pepito he would send me there'; but already he was astonished at himself for having feared Harrison. He said in a calmer voice: 'What does Mundoo want with me?'

'He wants you for his agent. He thinks that white men are subtle, bold and fortunate. He wants a white man to help him in his trade. Hannibal has promised to give him one—to pay a debt. It was his scheme—Hannibal's—not mine. I own I fancied you would not dislike it.'

'And brought me here tied with ropes——'

'That was Old Purpleface. He thinks you love him. He said that you would never leave him save in bonds. Richard, pray move. You hurt me still.'

Mr. Carey shifted again. He sought for truth, but he could not find it. The shadow of his fear fell again upon his spirit. Harrison began to speak again; his voice dropped honey.

'Truly, you would do well to go with him. What can you do here? This is no Morocco slavery that we send you to. The man needs an agent to order his affairs. You would be better off than any agent of the Company's—

any Company's, English or Dutch. He is the richest Negro on the Coast and you would grow rich along with him.'

'Why not you?'

'He wants you. He likes you, Richard. You and he are tall men, and I am not fit for this work.'

'If one goes it shall be you.'

Harrison protested, but Mr. Carey silenced him with a gesture. He saw lights stealing up the creek and heard the noise of paddles. He bade the Negroes bind Mr. Harrison fast to the hammock. They did it joyfully; one of them, making a gag of wood and cloth, forced it into his mouth.

When Mundoo's people came ashore Richard watched them from the shadows; he saw the wicked man fall into that same pit which he had digged. But, as he watched Harrison laid in the canoe, he suddenly relented. He ran out of his shadows, and snatching a leaf-shaped sword from one of Don Hannibal's men, came up to the prisoner. 'If you wish it,' said he, 'I will cut your throat.'

Harrison shook his head and spluttered through his gag. The Carthaginians laughed and shouted. Mundoo's men pushed off from the shore.

Mr. Carey supposed, from Harrison's behaviour, that he was not going to Pepito.

XXI

THE next day Don Hannibal received him kindly and did not once ask for Harrison. Mr. Carey supposed that the Negroes had told him the whole story and that he was not displeased by it. He had no rival now in Carthage; none of the Negroes could pretend to that title, and Domingo, who had dreaded Harrison, was his grateful servant. Don Hannibal seldom went abroad, except to a skittle alley which he had in the forest, or to the mud flats where he shot crocodiles from his great canoe. Their hides being too tough for lead bullets, he shot them with little pieces of silver. He had a service of Spanish plate, very richly chased, which he broke up piece by piece in this sport. The management of his affairs was left to Mr. Carey. It was Mr. Carey's business to levy taxes and compose quarrels in the three tributary villages, to lead the army in time of war, to hunt the elephants and other wild beasts which destroyed the crops, and to negotiate at Arebo with the Dutch merchants or with the King of Benin's Viceroy there. He had to play at chess every day and to hear such stories as Don Hannibal chose to tell him.

These stories were all old. Don Hannibal's English patent dated from 1617, the year before the founding of the first English Company trading in Africa. He held, by virtue of it, 'the part of Africa called Carthage' by a princely tribute of three live elephants which he, or his

heirs, must present to King James, or his heirs, whenever any one of them should happen to visit the country. Mr. Carey, who foresaw that it would be his duty to catch the elephants, hoped that King Charles the Second would never in his wanderings stray so far. If he came, his tribute would not be refused him; Don Hannibal professed unalterable loyalty to his person, regarding him with peculiar veneration, both as the head of a family to whom he held himself obliged, and as a living martyr in the cause of all legitimate princes.

But, for all his loyalty, Don Hannibal had taken no part in the late unhappy wars; he had not seen England since his patent was signed. He had been more lately in Spain; he was there when Prince Charles wooed the Infanta, and his dearest stories were all of Olivarez, whom he called his friend, and of the Duke of Buckingham, whom he hated. The latest song he knew was a scurrilous one against Buckingham; an English trader had once taught it to him, and he treated Mr. Carey to it every now and then. The Olivarez stories were all of ladies whose company they had enjoyed together. When he was sober these ladies were princesses of infinite loveliness and virtue; but when he was drunk their quality declined, and his plays were staged, not in palaces, but in wine-shops and houses of ill-fame. The tales themselves were so rambling and confused, so subject to changes in every detail of place, person and circumstance, that Richard could never make head or tail of them. He was at first provoked because so many were told in contempt of his

own great hero, Sir Walter Raleigh, whose memory he himself had almost worshipped as a boy; but he came at last to regard them all as childish fables which need never trouble a reasonable man. Of the laws, the policy and the extent of the Negro kingdoms in Africa, Don Hannibal would seldom speak, though Mr. Carey believed that no Englishman understood them so well. He learnt very soon to look wise without listening at all, only tuning his ears to catch every stray word of the things he wished to know.

His own thoughts gave him diversion enough. When he had finished his business for the day, which in itself commonly gave him some cud to chew, he slipped away alone to fish or shoot. The forest and the river were his books; he could never read in them too long. In the palace he thought over what he had seen, revolving this mystery and that, planning new bait for his fish and new charges for his Italian gun. For Mundoo's gun had fallen to his share, being too long and too heavy for Don Hannibal, who liked the weapons to which he was accustomed. Besides, he had no rest for it. One rest he had which he had never before used; it was of bronze, and finely moulded after the barbarous manner of the country. The fork was shaped like two serpents with catfish in their mouths and their tails coming out of the eyeballs of a corpse. The staff was enriched with figures as elegant. Only this incomparable rest seemed fit for the new gun with its cupids and centaurs, but the new gun was too powerful; at its first recoil the serpent forks were broken.

Don Hannibal would not fire it again; he left it to Richard, who had a rest made out of the strongest wood he could procure hammered round with bands of iron.

In general he did not use a rest at all. He laid the barrel on some convenient bough, aiming carefully at the mark which he had chosen, before he blew upon the match (whose end was twisted round his left wrist) and put the spark to the tinder hole. When he failed of his first shot he did not often get another; for, with the noise of the explosion, by the time that he had cleaned his pan and loaded again, that part of the forest was commonly empty. But as he aimed well he seldom needed another, this gun carrying farther and more exactly than any he had ever seen. He gradually became so proficient with it that his fame as a marksman reached Arebo, whose Viceroy, a very princely Negro and a better huntsman than most Benin men of his quality, began to hold him in esteem.

Their friendship was soon cemented in war. There was a tribe of Negro pirates, commonly called the Pirates of Usa, which inhabited the mouth of the river. These people, though they were not strong enough to attack any considerable ship, did infinite harm in seizing upon fishermen and other defenceless people to sell them in exchange for food to the Portuguese. They were driven to this kind of traffic, for, their country being altogether swamp, they could not get a living in any other manner. They had lately established a colony upon the borders of Carthage, from which they harassed the subjects of Great Benin.

Mr. Carey, going to Arebo, found that place in great confusion. There were a hundred stories of the pirates, their number and their cruelty; traders dared not stir abroad, and the townspeople seemed to fear a siege. The Viceroy was sick, his house full of lamentations, and he himself as much troubled in mind as in body. On Mr. Carey's wondering that so great a man should be discomposed by a boatload of inconsiderable people, the great man told him that he knew this business must prove his certain ruin; his brother, a subtle and ambitious courtier, had determined to avenge himself upon him for some imagined slight, and would take such a story to Benin City as must wholly destroy his credit there.

Mr. Carey said he had nothing to fear; he could destroy the pirates and raise his credit higher than ever. The Prince of Carthage might be persuaded to undertake the affair.

Don Hannibal (who understood very well the importance of having a friend at Arebo) undertaking it readily, both powers agreed that the Viceroy should furnish two canoes for the campaign and Carthage two more, with Mr. Carey in command. This armada, meeting at last near the landing stage at Carthage, set out in good order. The Benin war canoes were loaded with great bundles of dried grass, and a fleet of smaller craft carried more of the same kind of cargo.

The pirates were encamped upon an island with the river on one side of it and a deep swamp on the other. The Viceroy's people, who were good boatmen enough,

(being Jekri men and not Bini,) came to the front of this island and made as though to attack it from the water. While they were shouting at the pirates and the pirates threatening them again, with the exchange, now and then, of a musket ball or of a flight of arrows, Mr. Carey and his people, each with a bundle of grass on his back, waded through the swamps behind. Whenever they came to a place too deep for wading they used some of their bundles to make a bridge.

The pirates thinking only of the Jekri men in front, Mr. Carey was upon them before they were aware; and when they turned to fight the Carthaginians, the Jekri men landed from their boats. When the fighting was over Mr. Carey was a little ashamed to find how few his enemies had been, there being no more than a dozen slain and half as many taken, with two or three, perhaps, who had hidden themselves in the bushes. He found a few persons, both men and women, to set free. With these, and the prisoners, and the rest of the booty (which was poor enough) he went back to Carthage.

Don Hannibal was enchanted with this victory. He had known many and greater in his youth, but for a long time now he had seen no such triumph; his golden age was renewed in it. On Mr. Carey's advice, he sent the booty to Arebo with the rescued prisoners, desiring the Viceroy to send him two boatloads of millet; for, though the soil of Carthage was fertile, its grain was commonly spoilt by the dampness of the air. The pirate prisoners were divided between the two allies. Those that were left in

Carthage brought their conquerors little profit, proving incorrigibly idle and thievish.

This battle was fought in the year that Oliver Cromwell died. The news of his death was received at Carthage with great rejoicings, and (as Mr. Carey could not but remark) with almost the same ceremonies as those with which the murder of King Charles the First was yearly remembered there. Don Hannibal had decreed that that anniversary should be held as a day of solemn mourning; but, though he could command his subjects to lament, neither he nor anyone else could prescribe to them the manner of their lamentations. They performed these like all their countrymen, who seem in their feasts to confound joy and sorrow; and thus a day kept by most cavaliers with silent sadness was solemnized at Carthage with shouts and barbarous dances, with beating on drums and blowing on elephants' teeth, and with the slaughter of many cattle, whose spirits were dismissed to content the martyr king while their bodies were devoured by the Carthaginians. These rites, down to the slaughter of the cattle, were all performed for the usurper.

The English loyalists in Africa had supposed that upon Oliver's death the king must come to his own; but they found soon that they had been mistaken, Richard Cromwell succeeding his father as Protector without the least disturbance, as though his ancestors had always held that office. Not for two more years did they hear the news they longed for. When it came at last, for nearly three weeks there was not one sober person in Carthage.

XXII

RICHARD believed now that the world would be made anew, and that he had only to go home in order to recover the estate which he had lost by his loyal services. He had some remorse at leaving Don Hannibal, but he remembered that the old man was well served by Domingo and the Negroes, to whose ministry he was accustomed. Besides, since the last treaty with Arebo there could be no danger from that quarter, the Viceroy, out of his regard for Mr. Carey, having bound himself to observe it publicly and by the most solemn oaths known to his countrymen. Indeed, he was Richard's debtor, for he was so far from having lost his credit at Benin City after the expedition against the pirates, that he had received from thence a great green jewel. This jewel, which he imagined to be the home of a powerful spirit, he now wore round his neck, together with his many strings of beads, the usual badges of his rank.

The Prince of Carthage was not at all willing to lose his grand vizier; but they parted kindly, Don Hannibal presenting him with three and a half ounces of gold dust, (as near as he could measure it with the beans that passed for weights at Carthage,) one half ounce for every year that Richard had spent in his service. This gift, though it seemed large at Carthage, must shrink more than a little on a part of the Coast where gold was less uncommon. Mr. Carey could hardly have fitted himself out for his

voyage, in a manner conformable to his expectations. without the help of Domingo. But Domingo, who loved him and understood his necessities, brought out the whole store of gold dust and minted money—English, Dutch and Portuguese—which he had industriously gathered together during the fifteen years that he had lived in Carthage. He divided this into two parts and begged Mr. Carey to take one, not doubting that, if he lived, he would find some way to repay him Mr. Carey refused, since, as this treasure too was worth very little, he foresaw that the gain to himself must be much smaller than the loss to Domingo. Then Domingo showed him accory beads and branches of blue coral, things mightily esteemed by all the Blacks and found only in Great Benin. These, and a boatload of country stuff, such as fine cotton cloths and other goods, Mr. Carey might exchange at Axim or Cormantyn Castle for enough gold to carry him to Europe. Such an offer was too good to be refused.

Mr. Carey shipped at Agatton, the port of Benin City, in the *Merchant's Delight*, a ship that was afterwards taken and plundered by the Dutch. He himself did not share in that misfortune; he disembarked with his merchandise at Cormantyn some time before it happened.

At Cormantyn he changed his goods, the people here doing a great trade in gold, slaves, fish and palm wine. He found this country far more populous than Benin; Great Cormantyn swarmed with people, and Annambo, a town not far removed from it, passed for the strongest upon the Coast. Little Cormantyn, which stood under the walls of the Castle, seemed poor enough and wretchedly built;

but the fort itself was reasonably large, with several small batteries and one great one. Fort and towns were set among rocky hills half smothered in forest.

The Negroes here were as proud as the Bini, and much more quarrelsome; their laws were less commendable and not so well obeyed. They lived in continual broils with each other and with the Europeans. As for the Europeans at the Castle, Mr Carey found them hardly more civil; all their talk was of the new Charter that should restore the Company to its rights and drive the Interlopers out of business. He would have had more trouble, both with Englishmen and Blacks, if his reputation had not gone before him.

What troubled him most was his hearing on all sides how little justice he might hope for in England. At an ordinary kept by a Negro woman and much frequented by merchants, he met an old acquaintance of his, one Mr. Edward Kinaston, the brother of a fellow-Templar, who enlarged upon this theme. 'You must turn Presbyterian, Sir,' said Mr. Kinaston. 'The canting rogues drink the King's health and sit tight on our money bags. They have all the best places at Court, while we Cavaliers have scarcely a whole shirt or a plate of victuals between us. They say that His Majesty hates the sight of us—God damn him for it; and God damn us all!' With this last word he fell to weeping tears of brandy among the plates and dishes, while one of the standers-by officiously whispered in Mr. Carey's ear that the poor gentleman was singularly well affected towards the Monarchy, and had lost a great estate in Shropshire by his loyal service in the

late unhappy wars. This surprised Mr. Carey hardly less than the poor gentleman's loyal expressions had done; he remembered him as a younger son with no estate to lose.

But, however little credit he might give to such a story, his confidence was staggered at last by what he heard from every European in Cormantyn. In a street fight between the Company's Negroes and others he fell in with a very honest man, the agent of a gentleman now settled in Barbados, whose name he well remembered as an old friend of his father's. This agent had come upon his master's business and was about to return to the island. He was not young and the fight had shaken his courage, so he begged Mr. Carey to go with him, promising him a free passage in return for his company. Mr. Carey agreed to go; this new world in England was so strange to him that he resolved to learn more about it before he tried his fortune there.

He embarked upon the *Faithful Advice*, a ship of two hundred and sixty tons lately hired by the Company. The voyage, for several reasons, was uneasy to him. He had lost the habit of conversing with his own countrymen; their ceremonies and all their way of life had grown unfamiliar to him, and he had a secret dread of provoking their laughter by his awkwardness. Indeed, there was a singularity in his lean figure and straw-coloured beard, as in his new suit cut by the best tailor in Cormantyn, which made him a proper subject for their wit; but the length of his arm, with something formidable in his air, won him so much respect from the three or

four apprentices and young traders, who might have been his tormentors, that they were content to leave him alone, especially after he had knocked their heads together for some piece of impertinence attempted by them when they were in liquor.

Other discomforts could not be so happily cured. The sun's light, striking upon the naked sea, hurt his eyes, which had been so long used to the gloom of the forest. Besides, as he had not slept in a room since he was first brought to Carthage, he could not now endure the closeness of a cabin; he was forced to lie on deck under the stars. He had reasoned himself out of his old fear of them, and could listen with patience while his agent, who was something of an astronomer, described their names and several properties; but waking at night to behold them shining over the sea, to reckon up their number as far as he was able, and to consider what the agent told him, that every planet was a world as great as this, he was oppressed with an intolerable sadness and with a kind of foreboding, as though the vastness of the universe could set God farther from him. He had not seen so wide a sky since he left Pepito.

He had more than the stars to make him think of Pepito; the *Faithful Advice* was a slave ship. Her captain had traded at Agatton, and grew eloquent when he inveighed against the laws of Great Benin; for the Bini were forbidden to sell men out of their country, and their prisoners of war were commonly sacrificed to some god or devil at the yearly festivals. The traders all condemned such inhuman barbarity; but Mr. Carey, seeing the

sufferings of the Negroes on board, thought that no devil in Africa could be more cruel than the Mammon whose victims they were.

There was one of them who had been left at Cormantyn by a Portuguese Interloper. He did not come from the Gold Coast proper like all the rest, but from the pirates at the mouth of Benin River. How they had caught him there was no telling; he spoke no language that Mr. Carey knew. His face was scarred as though for ornament, but not with those ridges favoured by the Bini and other nations round Carthage. Only he was covered, body and limbs, with small marks left upon him by the mouths of leeches. Mr. Carey knew those marks, for he wore them himself. The man (if he were a man, and not a monster as the apprentices affected to believe,) was small and very ugly and seemed more barbarous than his fellows. Mr. Carey took a fancy to him and bought him from the captain at a cheap rate.

Although he was cheap he proved a bad bargain. Mr. Carey tried many ways of conversing with him and hit at last upon the plan of imitating the noises made by several birds and beasts in the forest, which, as a hunter, he had learnt to do very exactly. The savage seemed to know these sounds and to be enchanted by them. He began to follow Richard like a shadow, moaning and crying if ever they were parted by the thickness of a door. The sailors soon took notice of this and christened him Faithful, partly on account of it and partly in honour of their ship. But Faithful was the worst servant in the world; if he understood an order he would seldom obey it. He had

sullen fits and melancholy fits, he was very revengeful and passionate, he scratched and bit his master whenever he was angry. Besides, he would not wear clothes, though the civil sorts of Negro delighted in the finest they could get. Bracelets were enough for him; he used them as pockets, sticking into them such trifles as pleased his fancy. He was not so much a thief as wholly indifferent to the nature of property.

The captain offered several times to cure him with a rope's end, but Mr. Carey would not suffer it, thinking they would kill before they cured him. He valued Faithful. He was homesick, and not for England; he thought of England seldom, and always with misgiving. His mind continually strayed back to Carthage. In calm weather he lay in the bows, while Faithful sat upon the bowsprit fishing in the sea with a length of English twine and with a hook of his own making. Faithful chattered in his own language, now to his master and now to his line, now to the ship or the sea with the fish in it. Sometimes he sang the songs of his country. Richard neither talked nor sang. He wondered whether the Carthaginians would trouble to clear their drains in the rainy season after the method he had taught them, whether many goats had been taken by the leopards, whether Mataion had remembered to oil the Italian gun. All steel rusted at Carthage if it were not continually oiled. He thought of the mist lying heavy like white wool, or stealing through the forest in rainbow-coloured coils. He thought of the dank shaded waterways and of the antelopes coming down to drink. He remembered the path behind the palace, and the carved posts,

and the little grey ape that stole their sacrificial yams. The train of his thoughts was broken by shrill cries when his savage hooked something larger than he wanted.

At Barbados, which they reached after a prosperous voyage, Richard met with extraordinary kindness. The island was loyal and famous for its hospitality, and his father's friend (who received him gladly when he was at last persuaded that this was the son of Orlando Carey) was one of the principal gentlemen in it. He told Richard that his English news was true; the Presbyterians had brought back the King, and though a few courtiers, like the Duke of Buckingham, might get more than they had lost, it was not in His Majesty's power to restore the fortunes of all those who had suffered for him. This same story was told with scandalous additions in every ordinary in Jamestown. The Barbadians were out of love with the court. They were ruled by Lord Willoughby, a tenant of the Earl of Kinnoul who held the island by an old patent. They did not like this kind of government. In the wars they had been faithful to King and Common Prayer Book; they thought that they ought now to become immediate subjects to the crown, as freeholders, and not as tenants at will to a courtier. They were still faithful to the King, but they did not like his Parliament. They had no spokesman there, and they thought it very unjust that the Englishmen who adventured their lives and fortunes overseas should be subjected to the will and commandment of those that stayed at home.

With these islanders Mr. Carey rode and drank for a time. He soon perceived that he could get a larger

fortune among them than any he was likely to recover in England. They told him that their country (when they had once got rid of their Proprietors) would want for nothing to make it an earthly paradise, except a competent supply of Negroes at a lower rate than that which the English African Company allowed them. Since the Navigation Act, which excluded the Dutch, the English Company had enjoyed the sole right of conducting that traffic. But, as the Barbadians were all Free Traders, they were ready to welcome an Interloper, and they judged that no man was more fit for that part than Mr. Carey.

They could not guess how little he was fit for it. He knew that the trade in Negroes was defended by some very honest divines, who thought that the souls of these poor people (if indeed they had souls, which some doubted,) gained inestimably by its bringing them into a Christian country. He knew that they were criminals or prisoners of war, and that, in Africa, they must all have been slaves still, and some of them sacrificed and perhaps eaten. But when he thought of the slaves in Great Benin he esteemed that slavery happy, remembering that most of them were kept for pride and show much more than for profit, and that they slept much and worked little, living together, bond and free, in one family. The slaves in Barbados fared otherwise; in the sugar fields he passed great gangs of them, working under the whips of overseers. He could not behold them without a kind of horror, knowing that, whether they had souls or not, these poor wretches had the feelings of men. When he saw among them some of his own countrymen, shipped to the

plantations for little offences, he thought himself back in the mines. He hated this whole island, which, to most men, seemed a garden no less pleasant than fruitful. The wit of his new friends grew tedious to him; he perceived that he could never make them see the world as he did, and he desired to forget those sufferings which he could not mend. In his dreams he confounded Barbados with Pepito.

But still he would not go to England; his work there was not yet ready for him. His thoughts still turned to Carthage, as to his appointed place. His dreams, when they were not of Pepito, were all of Carthage, and most of them were terrible. He thought that he went back to find the place a ruin, and old Don Hannibal lying on his back with his throat cut and the rain streaming over him. Once or twice he was awakened, as he thought, by a voice that called his name. It happened that he heard a sermon in Jamestown preached upon this text, 'And he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision'. Mr. Carey's was not a heavenly vision, but he had no other at present.

He sailed for Cormantyn in the *African Frigate*, and reached it safely, though chased for a time by a Dutch warship, the *Golden Lyon*: the same which afterwards so cruelly harassed another English frigate, the *James and Charles*. He had turned the rest of his gold into tobacco, which he sold at a profit on the Coast that Domingo might not lose by his venture. On his own account he brought back nothing, except his slave Faithful and a bundle of tobacco pipes.

XXIII

The Carthaginians welcomed him with great joy, but without the least surprise, although he had parted with them for ever a short year before. Only Don Hannibal met him a little coldly, as finding him undutiful in not returning sooner. Yet there was a feast made for him and two whole oxen slain, a rare thing in that country, where beef is seldom eaten except upon extraordinary occasions. There was dancing, too, and the music of bells and horns, of drums great and small and of gourds strung with iron. He was followed all day by groups of people who asked him questions, stared at his new clothes, and rejoiced that their troubles were over since the Tortoise was home again. He was the Tortoise. The minstrels, who made songs about him now as they had formerly done about Don Hannibal, called him Elephant for his strength and Leopard for his swiftness; but his wisdom and his patience, which they praised most of all, won him that other name ; for they think the tortoise, which keeps its own counsel, the wisest beast in the forest. He resembled it too much to allow them to sing these songs in Carthage; he would not injure the old prince who had heard, for so long, no praises but his own.

Mataion told him why it was that the Carthaginians had expected his return; Don Hannibal had sent to all the wizards and the fetish doctors he could hear of for a spell to bring him home. To one of these fetish doctors,

a man of great repute who lived in a village near Awerri, he had given five goats, a flask of brandy, and two of the bronze plates that beautified the pillars of his house. One of the plates represented a Negro lord upon a horse, with two tall servants to support his arms and two small ones to play on horn and rattle. Upon the other was a crocodile. The figure on the horse was cast in high relief, the crocodile was less artificially wrought; but both plates were the work of a famous artist in Benin, and both were held there in as much esteem as any piece by Raphael or Mantegna could be in Europe. Don Hannibal was sorry to part with them, especially with the crocodile plate, which was embellished in one corner with the head of a European once reckoned remarkably like him. He was at first disposed to charge their loss to Mr. Carey's account.

Richard was not at all pleased by this story. Remembering his dreams and other odd fancies, he wondered whether he had not been deceived by some magical trick. But he had work enough to keep him from repining; he saw that he had not come back too soon.

As the Prince grew feeble his servants lost their awe of him; every creature neglected its duty. Domingo had quarrelled with Mataion's uncle and lived in the fear of death; all Carthage was split into factions, and not least the female part of it. The common business was so far neglected that the wall of the outer court, which had been half swept away in the rains, was not yet rebuilt, and there were a thousand holes in the thatch of the several galleries.

The state of affairs was very well understood in the

three dependent villages. They had sent no tribute since Mr. Carey left, and were now indulging in quarrels with each other. One of them harboured some of his old enemies the pirates, and the villagers had learnt so much from them that they had already seized upon canoes and other goods belonging to subjects of Great Benin. Besides, there had been among them much smallpox and other kinds of sickness, which was perhaps at the bottom of the trouble, for it made them suppose that the Shining One had lost his spiritual power.

All their confidence was now in the Tortoise, who deserved it as far as he was able. When he had restored them to order he began to hunt again. He found that Mataion had kept the long gun oiled; it was a better weapon, for all its antiquity, than any he had seen on his travels. He went to the mainland and shot an elephant with it. He sent one tusk to the king in Benin City, both as his just due, (for it died in his country,) and as a compliment very acceptable to him. They were fine tusks. He remembered afterwards the great bulk of the creature, and its ear cocked against the sky so much higher up than he had expected to see it. Now he was happy. He lay in his canoe in the swamps, where the hot moist air rose like steam from a cauldron. He watched the flies dancing on the skin of the water and the long-backed crocodiles sliding through it. He saw the mangrove trees rise from the water and sink down again with the rise of the tide. He smelt the old smells of rich swamp mud, with a waft now and then of heavy scented creeper, and

he heard familiar noises. The stars did not trouble him now; if his planet was the least among them he had his place upon it.

His place was narrowed for a time to Carthage itself. Don Hannibal, recovering soon from his ill-humour, resolved to bind Mr. Carey to him by a stronger spell than that which had brought him home. After pondering over the matter he sent at last to Awerri; not to the fetish doctor, but to one of the Jesuits there who had been a lawyer before he turned priest. He required this man to draw him up a will, bequeathing to Mr. Richard Carey all his rights, liberties, tenements, messuages, slaves, cattle and other goods, both movable and immovable, which he held both at Carthage and elsewhere in the continent of Africa, between Cape Blanco and the Cape of Good Hope. This document arrived, written out fairly in good Latin. Don Hannibal signed it in the presence of Domingo and of the Dutch factor who came from Arebo at his urgent invitation. There was an English factor there now, but the Prince of Carthage was not his friend. Mr. Carey was not told of the will until the next day, when he came back from his elephant hunt.

This was the last piece of business that Don Hannibal ever conducted; as it was, perhaps, the most profitable. The old prince lived on for a great while, but he did not keep his wits; he died very slowly from the top. At first he played at chess every evening, as he had done before Richard went away. But he played more and more by his own rules, till at last he fell to bowling at the chess men

with round peas. This also became troublesome to him, and he would sit for hours together, silent or muttering to himself, arranging his chess men in squares and circles. He did not go to his skittle alley now; he stayed in his court to bowl at the live crabs which the Negroes brought him. When he was tired of this game too, he had them all piled into a cairn and was troubled when they crawled away. He had an infinite store of seeds, shells, and bright coloured insects which the children were set to find for him. There was one striped bean which he kept for a long time hidden away, presenting it to Mr. Carey at last in a very formal manner. Once he was found diverting himself with a great black scorpion, and he wept when it was taken from him.

The Negroes laughed at him when Richard was not by; they were a merry people, not apt to reverence the infirmities of their governors. His wives tormented him and stole his treasure. Only Richard was always gentle with him. Besides his gratitude, he had a true affection for this gentleman, who had shown him so much kindness. He remembered the real greatness of the man, who by himself, through his own subtlety and courage, had hewn himself a principality in this terrific continent. If many Englishmen were of his mould the King of England might hold all Africa. He remembered too the fable of the dying lion, and how the asses brayed about his bed. There were asses enough to bray at Carthage; he would not leave his lion to their mercies. He gave up his hunting and fishing to sit all day in the court, and

forebore the use of his darling tobacco because Don Hannibal could not endure the smell of it. He had no resource left but mancala and shove-ha'penny, which he played on the chess board and at which the Negroes grew very expert. Only when the lion was asleep could he steal off to swim in the river.

On his deathbed Don Hannibal rallied his senses. He gave particular directions for his funeral and bade his subjects a stately farewell, commanding them to look on the Tortoise as their prince and to obey him in all things. He had two clergymen to help him out of the world : a Jesuit from the mission at Awerri and a crackbrained Independent preacher called Silas Pordage, who had betaken himself to the wilderness when King Charles came home. He would speak to neither of them; he declared that he was now, as he had always been, a Protestant of the Church of England. He died in Mr. Carey's arms in a great storm of thunder and lightning.

His obsequies were long remembered on the Coast. The Bini chiefs were commonly buried in cone-shaped pits, with wives and slaves and other things necessary for their use in the spirit world. But the soil at Carthage was too damp for such a pit, and Don Hannibal had himself commanded that his body should be burnt in the ancient Punic fashion. Mr. Carey caused a pyre to be built on the model of Queen Dido's, described in Virgil's *Æneid*, as nearly as he could remember it. He chose the skittle alley as the most fitting place : a clearing in the forest and yet near to Carthage.

Don Hannibal, his beard newly dyed and his eyebrows painted, was laid upon this pyre in his finest dress with a ring on his finger and a sword at his side. Gums and precious grains were burnt with him, such as the country afforded. Some, at least, of his wives and his counsellors should have been burnt too; but Mr. Carey would not suffer it. He could not remember that any creature had perished with Dido; except Anna, her sister, who did it willingly, out of pure love. No Carthaginian was willing to die with Don Hannibal, though many loved him after their fashion, and some would have done it for a prince of their own blood. They knew him for a demon who could never go to their ancestral spirit land, but must either depart to some demon Hell or wander through the world to do mischief to the kindly generations of men.

They had laughed at his weakness while he was still alive, but they feared him now that he was dead. When the pyre was lit, and the body began to curl up with the heat and one hand to move a little, they fell upon their faces in terror. Then the boldest of them, taking up their courage, began to beat on all kinds of instruments and to howl aloud with most lamentable voices in order to drive away the spirit of the dead. They kept this clamour up for days and nights together. They were confirmed in all their fears when the tame leopard died soon after its master; they thought that his spirit had called it.

XXIV

Richard Carey, having come into Africa as a slave, was now Prince of Carthage. He was not enchanted by his new greatness; he missed Don Hannibal and he had more than one piece of business to trouble his mind.

The first concerned Silas Pordage. In Don Hannibal's lifetime the Carthaginians had all been baptized at the well in the second court; but this Silas declared that he had a commission from Heaven to rebaptize them all by the ceremony of Complete Immersion. Mr. Carey saw very well that the man was a schismatic; he himself had an invincible prejudice in favour of the Church, as appointed by Law and governed by its Bishops. But, feeling in himself no inward motion to bring his people into that Church, he could not tell what he ought to do; he saw that an imperfect instrument might be better than none, and that God might truly have ordained this instrument for the salvation of the Negroes at Carthage. He therefore suffered Silas to remain till he should discover, by his fruits, whether he came from God or not. But the preacher, after provoking some extraordinary quarrels, finally departed with one of Don Hannibal's widows for company.

When he had gone, Mr. Carey took no more steps to change the religion of Carthage. He had heard many divines, of the King's party as well as of the other, declare

that of all the multitudes on earth only a very few are sealed to salvation. He thought it extremely hard that those who are condemned to torment in the next world should be troubled in this one upon the same account, since by no effort of the Temporal Power can they receive that Grace which only is effectual to save them. Besides, he inclined to the opinion of those Europeans who hold that Negroes are sprung from a seed outside the Covenant. Some of these Heathen were rascals, but he knew many that were brave and kindly, true in their dealings and inclined to deeds of mercy, faithful and obedient to their laws. He saw that, being Heathen, they were not fit for Heaven; but he could not believe that they would go down with sinners into the Pit. He supposed that there was another way appointed for them, the rather that they themselves believe it, looking forward to a life after death in a spirit world where the good and the bad are rewarded after their behaviour, and in which the Europeans have no part.

With these thoughts in his mind, he did not oblige them all to be baptized, as Don Hannibal had done, nor did he forbid them to seek such comfort as they could find in their own gods. He only forbade to them that kind of malignant witchcraft which they themselves abhor, and the practice of sacrificing some man or woman whenever the season was too wet or too dry. This last custom had been at one time stamped out by Don Hannibal, but it had slowly crept in again.

His next trouble was with Don Hannibal's wives. By

the law of the country they were Mr. Carey's wives now, but he was not at all more tenderly disposed to them than he had been before; their behaviour towards the old Prince in his sickness had left him with less regard for them than ever. Yet he was forced to make some provision for them. Most of them were content to marry their old lovers in Carthage; but, of the handsomer among them, there were those that did not choose to be given to subjects; they would have chiefs for their husbands, rich men with many wives, so that all the labour of the household should not fall upon them. If the Tortoise would not take them himself, he must find them something better than he offered them at present. Mr. Carey was strongly tempted to pitch them into the nearest swamp. At last, with their own consent, he sold them to Mundoo the Brassman, who could dispose of them, according to their several pretensions, among the neighbouring kings and governors.

The agent who came to manage this business was Accepted Harrison. He was thinner than ever, his clothes worse, his face longer, his eyes larger and brighter. Mr. Carey received him coldly at first, but presently repented, admiring a kind of greatness in this villain, who greeted him with that good breeding which never forsook him in the worst times. So Mr. Harrison, his limbs shaking with ague, wrapped in a blanket against the damp airs, crouched Negro fashion upon the mud platform, chewed the kola nut which he preferred to tobacco, and discoursed on high themes.

'I felicitate you, Richard,' said he. 'Your funeral was well conceived. May I suppose that Don Hannibal planned it himself?'

Mr. Carey allowed him that licence.

'It became him. Though he ruled over a mud flat and a few apes, no king of Spain was more a king than he. The first Englishmen that came into this country—we shall not look upon their like again. We are a smaller people, Dick: mortals, not gods. 'Tis money now that counts. Besides, we are too many. Rivals in trade—rivals in love are nothing to us now; they have gone out of fashion. There should be a play written called the *Rival Traders*; there would be more nature in it than in the common sort. You don't trade here, Dick?'

Mr. Carey owned there was little trade in Carthage. Mr. Harrison reproved him mildly for it, but declared that all traders were his debtors since he had smoked out his nest of pirates. He knew of that, as he knew of all that happened on the Coast. He knew the whole story of how Captain Holmes had, that winter, taken Goree, Cape Coast Castle, and every other Dutch fort in Guinea except Axim and Elmina. He said the wiser English merchants were not pleased at it; Holmes had sailed for the New Netherlands, and they feared the Dutchmen might now avenge themselves by some sudden stroke. He knew that the Barbadians were rid of their Proprietors in return for a perpetual tax which he thought would spoil their trade. He could tell the news from England: the Bishops were firm

in the saddle and nothing was heard now but loyalty. Only, he said, the Chancellor was detested; he had found the King a consort so ugly as was not to be endured in a wife. Besides he grew too proud; since his daughter had married the Duke of York there was no bearing with him.

In the affairs of the African kingdoms he was yet better informed. He had visited Kano in the north, and had been as far south as St. Juan de Loanda. He could tell of cannibals and of the Silent Trade and of countries where two slaves were sold for a handful of salt. He spoke of the wars, feasts and murders in the states bordering on Carthage, of what ships were in the ports, and of all the common topics of the country. He told his stories well. Mr. Carey, since he came home from Barbados, had only heard three Englishmen speak : Don Hannibal, Silas Pordage and the sottish factor at Arebo; he took pleasure in hearing Mr. Harrison. As a boy he had dreaded that bitter tongue, but his skin was thicker now; the gibes that had cut him once now tickled him pleasantly. Before Harrison left Carthage Mr. Carey offered to buy him back.

Harrison laughed at him; he was worth more to his master in money and goods than Richard had in the world. Besides, he did not choose to live in Carthage. He had embarked upon a way of life in which, as he had prophesied before, he might hope for better pickings than any agent in the Company's service. He had been unlucky that year, but, with a turn of fortune, he might

yet be as rich as John Cabessa. He owned he was infected with the Brassmen's notion, that a trader's life was more honourable than the life of those neighbouring kings and princelets who drowsed away the time with their wives and their liquor. Finally, he dared not live in Carthage. 'I love you now, Dick,' said he. 'That is the brandy. It is pleasant to see an English face and hear an English tongue. (Yours, I think, is rusty; but you give me a reason for listening to my own.) Yet some time or another, when Harmattan was blowing, we should quarrel again. Then my last state would be worse than my first.'

Richard confessed the justice of these arguments; he was not grieved to have his offer refused. They parted in amity, Harrison taking with him some few things which he had begged as a memorial of the dead Prince. Before he went he saw the monument which Richard had set up. This was no more than a block of hewn stone washed by a flood from a corner of the palace, which he had caused to be dug up and dragged to the skittle alley. Under this stone, in a bronze box set with brass roses curiously wrought, were interred Don Hannibal's ashes. On its sides Mr. Carey designed to record his name, his parentage and his chief exploits. To these he thought that the trader might help him; but Harrison knew no more than he. Of his parentage he had given them different accounts, saying at one time that he was the son of Queen Elizabeth and of the renowned Earl of Leicester, at another that he was the child of the Lady Arabella; though he was certainly too young for the one and too

old for the other. Again, he had called himself a grandson of that Earl of Warwick who was beheaded in the Tower in Henry VII's time; until they concluded at last that he was truly ignorant of his own descent, but was resolved that it should be extraordinary.

Of his exploits before he came to Africa they knew little more. His patents (granted by the Kings of England and of Spain, when Spain and Portugal were one country,) dated from 1617, the year after the poisoning of Sir Thomas Overbury, and the year that Sir Walter Raleigh made his last voyage. He himself had always declared that he was sent to Madrid by King James I to treat of a Spanish marriage for the Prince of Wales; but Harrison, who seldom erred in charity, believed that he had really gone there to hinder Raleigh's project and had been a chief instrument to bring him to the scaffold. Mr. Carey, remembering the stories he had told against Raleigh, held him innocent; he could not believe that any person of Don Hannibal's known magnanimity would blacken the name of a man he had betrayed. He remembered too that Don Hannibal had never been heard to speak of Sir Thomas Overbury; if he had ever been an instrument of the Court, or of wicked men there, Mr. Carey believed that it was in this business rather than in the other.

These were not stories fit for tombstones; and the things which he had told of himself were not more fit. His exploits in Africa were so woven with legends that there was no knowing what he had truly done there. Besides, if the certainty was known, there was no stone

cutter to engrave it in Carthage. There were ivory cutters, carpenters and metal workers, but not one of them would lay a finger on the stone; they thought that it was a devil.

Mr. Carey himself cut the epitaph in sprawling uncial letters: 'HANNIBAL, PRINCE OF CARTHAGE', it ran; with the date, 1664. The rest was covered by a 'Hic Jacet'.

After Harrison left Carthage Mr. Carey grew restless. He had still no desire to return to England, but the spirit drove him farther into Africa. He left Carthage for weeks at a time, now with a handful of his Negroes, now only with Faithful. Faithful had vanished for a while on their return to Africa; but either he could not find his home or else some enemy possessed it, for he was back in Carthage now. He had a perfect hatred of the Carthaginians, and they of him. He would not learn their language, or wear cloth as they did, or sleep inside a house. He stole their fish traps and teased them with a thousand apish tricks. Only for Mr. Carey did he show the least regard. He did not fear the path by the river, and always fished there when Mr. Carey walked up and down it in the evenings. He was always an uneasy companion: mournful without a cause, joyful without reason, working only when he chose, and sharing the fruits of his labour with no one. He would not so much as give his master one of the fish that he caught. The other Negroes came to suspect that he was a malignant sorcerer, but Richard, who inclined to the notion that he had lost his wits in his captivity, was his constant defender. He

was the only person in Carthage who tried to learn the speech of this barbarian, and his humanity was well rewarded; Faithful understood the nature of wild beasts better than any man in that country. He knew what plants were good for food and what for steeping arrow heads, he could follow an old trail, and in the darkest night he could not mistake his way.

With Faithful and the long gun a huntsman might venture far. The week that De Ruyter took Cormantyn Castle : seizing the chief factor, Mr. Francis Selwyn, and hanging out the English flag in his rigging to show his victory over it : Mr. Carey was in the lion country. There, in the uplands of the north-east, he had found a new race of Negro : herdsmen living in round huts and dressed in skins. De Ruyter swept like a flame down the Coast; but he might have been sailing behind the moon for all that these people knew of it. Richard only heard the story when he got back to Arebo. It did not grieve him; he was not in love with the Company.

XXV

THE Company of Royal Adventurers Trading in Africa had been remodelled in the spring of 1663. It had a long list of shareholders, with the Queen and the Duke of York at the head of them. It held all regions and dominions from the Port of Sallee to the Cape of Good Hope, for a term of one thousand years, by a tribute of two elephants payable to His Majesty and his successors whenever he, or they, should land upon the coast.

It held all mines of gold and silver there, with the sole privilege of trade into and from that part of Africa. No subject of the British Crown might visit the country or export from it red-wood, elephants' teeth, Negro slaves, hides, gum, wax or grains without the Company's leave.

It had the power to appoint governors there, to raise forces, send out ships and ordnance, execute martial law, hold courts, make laws not repugnant to the laws of the realm, punish offenders by fine and imprisonment, and to seize upon the ships, slaves, goods and merchandise of all Interlopers.

The profits of these confiscations were to go half to the Crown and half to the Company. As for the mines, the Crown was to receive two-thirds of the profits, paying two-thirds of the charges for working them. To the Company fell the other third of profit and expense.

This last clause in the Company's charter was perhaps intended to dazzle the courtiers; no known European

had ever worked the mines in Guinea, except the Boones, whose settlement at Pepito had been wholly destroyed in the wars between Fida and Great Ardra. The Negroes farther west guarded their diggings jealously, and those merchants who understood their business knew very well that, from the nature of the country and its unwholesome air, they could hope for more profit there by trade than by conquest. The rest of the scheme, the monopoly of trade, was a very pretty bubble; it was pricked by De Ruyter.

By the peace of Breda, when both sides kept their own conquests, the English had Cape Coast Castle confirmed to them, instead of their old fort at Cormantyn. But this did not set the Company upon its feet again; it was bankrupt now in wealth and reputation. Its forts and warehouses had all been destroyed, its shipping burnt, its treasure carried off. Its chief agents were quite out of favour, for they had not made that resistance which was expected of them. Only John Cabessa, the great Negro merchant, got any praise; he had beaten off the first attack at Cormantyn and had cut his own throat, when the castle surrendered, rather than yield to the Dutch. The Company's factors were no match now for the swarms of Private Traders, who undersold them up and down the Coast, diverting a stream of gold and slaves that might have preserved it from ruin.

In 1668 Henry Selwyn was factor at Arebo. He was cousin to that Francis Selwyn who had been taken by De Ruyter. He had no hopes of preferment; Thomas

Pearson, the new Chief Factor, was not his friend, and his family had now no credit with the Directors. He was likely to live and die at Arebo, being in the Company's debt for more money than his pay would cover for ten years to come. He had a periwig and a scarlet coat, a mud hut thatched with leaves, two thievish Negro soldiers who had been driven out of every other service, a Mulatto wife and an English Assistant. He lived partly on the Company's credit and partly by selling liquor to the traders.

On a hot morning in the dry season three Dutch soldiers, two English shipmasters and a Frenchman were drinking under his roof. With them was a gentleman lately come into those parts: Captain Castel, whose ship, the *Orange Tree*, had been lent by His Majesty for the Company's service.

The Frenchman and a shipmaster were throwing mancala beans. The rest watched them. The second shipmaster, who was already drunk, made wagers on the game which no one took. Mr. Selwyn, without coat or wig, sprawled upon a bench. His wife served out drink to the company, helped by the Assistant, a thin lad all eyes.

The captain had a grievance. He sat apart with a flask of Bourbon beside him, his moustache bristling, his hat cocked over one eye, rumbling like an earthquake and brooding over his wrongs. He had been jostled that day on the quay by an Englishman—a ragged fellow—a tall yellow rogue with a long gun. *He* had been jostled —*he*, Captain Castel. He would slit the knave. 'Slife!

He glared about him, his thumbs thrust into the armholes of his waistcoat, and dared the company with his looks to ask him why it was not done already. None presuming, he gave reasons. The rascal had a bodyguard —a cut-throat Negro bodyguard. *But* he would follow him—he would find out his name. If the rogue were a gentleman—worthy of steel—he would pink him to-night.

Mr. Selwyn thought that he was not. He knew the fellow—rot him—a runaway servant that had practised upon an old doting Portuguese grandee that owned half the country. The ungrateful rascal had poisoned this gentleman and taken his estate. Mr. Selwyn had heard the whole story from honest Mr. Harrison, the trader.

'Slife ! The captain would cudgel the villain !

Mr. Selwyn thought he would be ill-advised to attempt it. The rogue could bring one score, ten score—nay, ten thousand cut-throats down upon them. Ten thousand cut-throats he had up the river. If he wore no coat abroad, it was known that he had a chest full of gold lumps at home. A chest full ? A room full, as great as Selwyn's house. Such, while honest men starved, were the wages of a Poisoner, a Pirate, an Interloper.

At the term ' Interloper ' the captain exploded in a shower of oaths. It was to deal with the Interlopers that the Company sent out such men as he.

At this point one of the Hollanders, understanding that Mr. Carey was mentioned, began to speak of him in a mixture of Dutch, English and Portuguese. Then the rest, Dutch, French and English, told what they knew.

They gave him lands, wide as the provinces of an empire, stretching away behind swamps and lagoons : lands rich in wheat and millet, with unnumbered herds of cattle and towns a-swarm with fighting Negroes. They spoke of rivers with gold in their sands.

The day grew hotter; drifts of warm air, prickly with dust and laden with a dozen stenches, floated in at the open doorway. The mancala players stopped their game; the small round beans were too heavy for their hands. The lizards still darted in and out and the hens scratched on the foul mud floor, but the men's voices drooped in the heat and their words fell more and more slowly. They spoke of Carthage. They hung its pillars with gold plates for bronze, and laid silk cushions on its mud divans. They set its courts with orange trees and fountains of rose-water, they filled them with nightingales and lovely, gentle girls. Every delight which a starved imagination could devise did they impute to Carthage; while, in the factor's house, vermin dropped from the open thatch and the smells of brandy and bad tobacco were vanquished by the smells of the Negro town.

They spoke of Mr. Carey, making him a god after the image in their own hearts. They drew him great in lust as in strength, subtle, bloody, treacherous. They told stories of him, of things that he had done, and things that they themselves might have done if they had been as strong as he.

The heat conquered them and their stories ended. The drunken shipmaster was fast asleep, his mouth open

and the flies buzzing round it. The others envied him. They lay panting with half their clothes torn off, drowsing, and yet kept half awake with prickly heat and tormenting flies.

The young Assistant dozed with his head upon the table. He had not followed all the talk. He was newer to the place than Captain Castel and understood, as yet, only his own tongue and the Latin. Besides, he had been running to and fro fetching liquor. But he had heard them speak of an Englishman who was stronger than any man in Benin, who could break the neck of an ox with his bare hands and shoot farther than a common man could see: of a hunter who had killed lions and went alone after elephant. He longed to behold this gentleman; he was dreaming now of the fountains of Carthage and of a splendid giant riding on an elephant, who gave him a gun and bade him see which of them could shoot the farthest. He put it to his shoulder, but it went off too soon, it recoiled and struck him behind the ear. He woke up with a start.

The blow was a real one; Mr. Selwyn had flung a shoe at him. Mr. Selwyn, propped up on his elbows on the bench, was complaining: 'Rot me, they send them younger every year. The last was a child, this one is a baby. Rot me, a puling infant. They send them to me fresh from school. Rot me, he cannot conjugate his verb. You rogue, you brat; here's all the gentlemen have their cans empty.'

The lad was a discreet lad; he would not provoke a

quarrel where he must be defeated. He had not come to Africa to fill cans, but he knew that Mr. Selwyn was his lawful superior and that it was his duty to obey him. With a full jug in each hand he crossed the patch of sunlight by the door : a long patch now, for it was four hours after noon. As he crossed the light, a shadow falling suddenly in front of him made him stumble and spill half his wine. He followed the shadow to the feet of him who threw it and saw a tall, lean man against the dazzle of the sky.

Mr. Selwyn sat up and cursed him, but his oaths turned to obsequiousness when the stranger came in. ' Mr. Carey, we have not seen you this half year. All's well with you, Sir, I hope. We have Virginia for you, Sir; the finest leaf. You will find it delicate. Tony, cub, puppy : a clean glass for Mr. Carey.'

He waved Mr. Carey to his own bench. Mr. Carey sat down. He moved very softly, like a great cat; it was that which had made his shadow fall so oddly. His clothes were odd too: old Dutch boots, old breeches and a torn shirt, a brass powder horn on a necklace of leopard's teeth and a leopard-skin pouch slung at his hip. All this, with his long gun, might pass at Arebo; but his hat was strange even there. It was tall and steeple crowned, like the beavers worn in England in King James's time, but it was not a beaver. It was woven very neatly out of coloured grass, and stuck through the band with three or four parrot's feathers. This hat, above a ragged yellow beard and bleached hair, might have

moved laughter. The company at Mr. Selwyn's did not laugh. Even without the stories they had heard of him, the muscles of Mr. Carey's arms and the sideways glancing of his eyes would have restrained them.

The captain had seen him and was rumbling himself into a passion. He had thrown off coat and waistcoat, and his ruffles were limp with the heat; but he sat up, clapped his hat on at an angle, flung out his chest and stuck his thumbs into his shirt sleeves.

He had no time for more. Tony, staring like the rest, had fetched a mug (there were no glasses in that house) and Mr. Carey lifted it to his lips. As he did so his eye caught Tony's and he stopped suddenly, staring over the rim with such a look of fear, rage and astonishment as filled the lad with equal amazement and some dread.

He put the cup down and lifting his hand pointed it at Tony, twisting his lips as though he was trying to speak and could not. 'Selwyn, who is that?' he croaked at last.

Mr. Selwyn looked round. 'Rot him, that is my Assistant. You see what they send me. The last was a child, this is a baby. Rot him, he cannot conjugate his verb. That is my Assistant, Tony Godwin.'

Mr. Carey picked up his gun and walked out of the door.

XXVI

WHEN Richard looked into Phillida's eyes over the top of his mug he did not at first understand what God had done. In his thoughts she was scarcely older than Tony, and he did not perceive that this could be her child. Besides, it was a great while since he had thought of her at all. When he was at Pepito, and for many years after he left it, she had been seldom out of his mind; she was the person who had sent him there. At first he had thought 'she and Godwin'; but, because Colonel Godwin was nothing to him, his part in the business had faded. In the bottom of his heart, he could not believe that the plain blunt soldier, which he took Godwin to be, would plan such a piece of devilry.

As for Ezekiel Boone, Mr. Carey did not hate him as one man hates another; he knew that he was possessed of a devil. He had heard much of possession since he came into Africa; he knew of wizards who could send their spirits into the bodies of leopards and crocodiles to govern those bodies and make them their instruments. A devil governed Ezekiel; Mr. Carey had seen him once and, from time to time, he still saw him in his dreams: a cool room high up under the pandanus thatch; a slave girl with a palm leaf fan; a man sitting cross-legged on the bed, his swollen limbs wrapped in cloths, and the devil looking out of his eyes. If he thought of the man

whom the devil inhabited he felt only horror and a desperate kind of pity.

He did not wish to be avenged upon the devil; he did not suppose for a moment that such a thing was possible. When he heard that Pepito had been destroyed he was glad for the sake of the poor wretches there; but, for himself, he was neither glad nor sorry. For him Pepito was eternal. He still, in his wanderings, avoided the north-west; and still at night, whether he slept in a forest camp or in the courts of strange princes, (where he was received with songs made in his honour, and with gifts of ivory and woven cloth,) he would wake in a sweat, thinking he heard the swish of the fan or the dry rustle of the pandanus thatch. Still there were times when he could not sleep in the open, remembering his old conceit that the stars were spies for Ezekiel.

But though no man could take vengeance on a devil, it seemed contrary to the manifest purposes of God that wickedness should go unpunished. He had heard that only through man's wickedness did the devil get power over man; and he knew who it was who had delivered him up to Ezekiel. And not him only. In his weakness and fever in the swamps he had begun to confuse the things which he had suffered with the things which he had seen, and to lay the guilt of them upon the same person. Innocent blood, the blood of Thomas Evans, cried out against Phillida.

He had thought of himself as the chief agent in her punishment; but, for some years now, that notion had

fallen into the back of his mind; his dreams had become fewer and less terrible. When he met with Tony Godwin he perceived that, though he himself had forgotten it, God had not forgotten. Then he remembered that the sins of fathers are visited on their children, and saw how it might be with the sins of Phillida and her husband.

He was half way to Carthage before his mind was clear upon the matter; he had left Arebo like a sleep walker. The canoe men were sullen at first, grieved at being torn so early from the pleasures of the town. Near Carthage their hearts grew lighter and they began to sing, one chanting the verse while the others took up the chorus. They sang the hymn to that magic crocodile which Don Hannibal slew: an old song, Mr. Carey had heard it when he first came to Carthage. But though the chorus was the same they put in new verses, praising him and mocking at each other. They liked him very well, they were proud of his fame and glad to be called his children. They had confidence in him: in his strength, his wisdom and his justice. But they did not love him as they loved the memory of their first Prince. Though they feared Don Hannibal's ghost, they still loved his memory. He, the Shining One who built Carthage, was more truly their father; he was nearer to them in heart and spirit than Richard could be.

Richard was near them that evening; he made verses with them; he made them compete, the men paddling on one side against the men on the other, to see which could push the canoe's head round. He promised a feast

to the winners and laughed, with the rest, when the boat was half swamped. At Carthage he sent for Domingo and ordered the feast. Domingo was very fat now and had lost his old timidity; he had a wife to cook for him, and a master in whom he trusted as Richard trusted in God. He was not even troubled when his master commanded him to have three bullocks slain, though that would make a greater feast than any held in Carthage since Don Hannibal's funeral. He supposed that there was some extraordinary reason for this festival; the other Carthaginians joyfully imagined that their Tortoise was drunk.

Mr. Carey watched them preparing the festival; from his heart he loved these people; he had lived with them for upwards of twelve years. He thought of that now and saw the changes that had happened among them. Some were dead, and there were new men brought in to fill their places; whenever he went for a long journey he came home with a man or two. They were strong young men: lion hunters, who desired to come to the sea and eat salt; or fugitives, who had made their own towns too hot for them; or slaves, given to him by their masters for his help in war or hunting. He knew that the Carthaginians did not like these new men, but he knew, too, that Don Hannibal had built up their nation in this same manner. He liked to see them here: strong young men, good soldiers. If they were turbulent, he knew how to rule them.

The Carthaginians themselves had changed; there was a new race of children; the children of Mr. Carey's

first days had grown into soldiers and the young men of that time were fat and grey headed. Mataion the dandy, grown thick set, limped from an old wound made by the fangs of a leopard. His wife, the prettiest of the widows, was already enormous; but she was a clever woman (it was she who made Mr. Carey's hats) and he was still pleased with her. She had a right to be fat, her husband was a great man in Carthage; he was always left joint regent with Domingo when Mr. Carey was away. He came up to Richard now and stood beside him while fires were lighted for roasting the meat. They smiled at each other without speaking. Mataion was happy, for he perceived that some excellent thing had befallen his friend.

When the feast began Richard took no part in it; his people rejoiced, but his joy was deeper than theirs. He went to walk alone by the river, where he could hear the drumming and see the fires reflected in the clouds above the palace wall; the sky now was covered with clouds, though the night was no cooler than the day had been.

Mr. Carey was not troubled by the heat; he did not remark it. He had been for twelve years in Carthage, and in those twelve years he alone had scarcely changed. He was as thin as he had been before. If his joints were less supple his muscles were tougher; he was stronger than he had been before, and he had learnt to husband his strength. There was still not one of his young men who could overthrow him in wrestling. Only, in those

twelve years of hunting, friendship, and many kinds of business, the hard resolves at the bottom of his mind had been overlaid by a crop of new thoughts. When he saw Tony that whole crop had shrivelled into nothing; he felt the old anguish and hoped for nothing but its satisfaction.

He foresaw its satisfaction; walking in the dark beside the river his spirit was informed with peace and with a great awe. The drumming in the palace was muffled by the thickness of the wall. It was answered by the croaking of a thousand frogs in the marshes. The glow of the sky was reflected, though dimly, in the river; and against it Mr. Carey could discern a shape like a sloth's hanging in the branches. It was his servant Faithful. Faithful had carried off his share of the feast; he hung in his chosen tree, swinging to and fro and singing to himself. Richard's heart was singing too: 'For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation' it sung. He remembered a piece of Scripture which had been often upon the lips of Tom Evans: 'I have been young and now I am old; but I have never seen the righteous man confounded nor his seed lack bread.'

* * * * *

Revolving the matter very carefully in his mind, he determined that as the vicarious punishment of the Godwins through their son was a clear Judgement, it was not fit for him to meddle therein. His lust for private vengeance he offered up upon the altar of Divine Justice,

as Abraham offered up his firstborn. Indeed, he did not feel it then; for he beheld the secret springs of Providence, having before him an awful proof of the Power, the Might and the Majesty of God. He had once thought of himself as an agent in this punishment, but he saw now that it must be perfected without his help. If a man may not be judge in his own cause, neither may he be executioner; and, as Richard's cause was altogether just, he would not stain it now with the smallest blot of injustice.

XXVII

But though Richard would not lift a finger in this judgement, he could not forbear from watching it worked out. This he might do whenever he chose to go to Arebo; Tony Godwin loved his company, and sought it as often as he could.

With a mind that loved to dwell on pleasant things, Tony found little pleasure in the conversation of Mr. Selwyn, or of such persons as frequented his house. With no friends upon the Coast, and few in England to do him any good, he could not hope at present to better his condition. He consoled himself with the best thoughts he had; and those that charmed him most were all of Mr. Carey. He resolved to grow as tall and to become as famous; he longed to see his hero, to handle his enchanting gun, and to hear from his own lips the history of his adventures. The strangeness of his behaviour at their first meeting did not trouble him at all; he imputed it to some cause not related to himself.

The first evening that he came on Mr. Carey smoking by himself upon the landing stage, he knew that his luck was in. He had only to find a pretext for addressing himself to his idol, and the pretext was ready; Mr. Carey had no gun. At another time Mr. Godwin would have regretted this; now he was glad. He sidled up with a great deal of ceremony: 'Your pardon, Sir. You left your musket at the factory?'

Mr. Carey stared down at him. 'Your pardon, Sir. Why should I leave a musket at the factory?'

'If you had left it at the factory I could have fetched —sent to fetch it for you.'

'I thank you, Sir. There is no need to fetch it.' He turned at the quay side while Tony stood by, pleased with his own courage and extremely flattered by the great man's civility. He was not afraid of satire; if he did not understand a saying he could always fancy that it had a good meaning. Mr. Selwyn called him 'Brat', but Mr. Carey had called him 'Sir'; he remembered what he had almost forgotten at Arebo, that it was a glorious thing to be an officer of the English African Company. He was not too busy remembering it to let Mr. Carey escape him so easily; he caught him at the next turn. 'We shall have rain, Sir; there are clouds to-night.'

'They will disperse by morning.' Mr. Carey stalked past him. Tony perceived that his state canoe was coming up the river; his boat's crew, with their silk waist-cloths, their ivory armlets, and the red parrot's feathers in their hair, were very famous at Arebo. They were all standing up, paddling at a great rate, and shouting to the other craft to give them room. At any other time Tony might have been glad of this; now he regretted it. It was not of the clouds that he wished to speak with his hero, but of that elephant with three tusks which all the world knew that he had seen. He pursued Mr. Carey down the quay. 'You have been here a great while, Sir?' he asked.

Mr. Carey stopped suddenly, staring at him again as though to find some meaning hidden in that question. 'Long enough to know the weather,' said he.

'And to be known, Sir,' said Tony, and blushed at his own forwardness.

Mr. Carey stepped into his canoe and vanished up the river.

That was the first of a dozen meetings. At about sunset, in the same place, Tony would find Mr. Carey. He was commonly seated upon an ivory stool carved all over with battle pieces in the Negro fashion. He was always alone, for the wharf was old and had a bad reputation; it was haunted by one or two spirits and by a legion of small black snakes. Tony, who did not think of snakes, or of scorpions or crocodiles, (except when he pictured himself overcoming them all in the forest,) liked to sit at the edge of it with his feet hanging over the water, or to lie stretched at length on the baulks of old timber.

He liked the timber best. After carrying pots all day at the factor's house, he could lie upon his back and watch the line of palms that hung between the crimson, gold and purple sky and the crimson, gold and purple water behind Mr. Carey's head. When crimson, gold and purple had turned to solid blackness, and the hooked nose and tall fantastic hat were quite blotted out, he could still watch the bowl of Mr. Carey's pipe: a great earthen bowl, wreathed with a snake and moulded to the likeness of a bearded face, which glowed and faded with its master's breath. Its reed stem was so long that the

glow never lit up his face, only his hand which supported the knob under the bowl. Tony liked to see it. He would say, ' I remember once at Twyning—you know Twyning, Sir ? '

And Mr. Carey's voice, a little muffled at the end of the pipe, would reply, ' I did know it.'

Then Tony would speak of Twyning, and of Ripple, and of Chasely marshes and Corse Lawn, recounting how, at such and such a place, he had met such and such persons, and how he had ridden with them hawking or hunting, with every least circumstance of their sport and all their conversation as far as he remembered it; for, like many interminable talkers who have seen little of the world, he was very exact in narrating what he knew. Mr. Carey related no adventures; it was not with stories of his elephant with three tusks, or of his two-headed lion, that he chained the young Assistant to that wharf; he had another charm : he could make Severn flow in the bed of Benin River.

As long as Tony spoke, the things that he spoke of were real and very close to him; when he thought of them without speaking of them he never could see them as plainly. He could not speak to Mr. Selwyn; but here was a man who neither swore at him nor mocked him, a man who knew his own country. When Tony watched the great earthen pipe bowl he saw Tewkesbury tower, and the kingcups at Chasely, and the rugged Malverns, and the long slopes of Bredon Hill. He saw the green hill behind his own home, the elms and the gables, and

the glass windows that caught the evening light. These visions were the clearer because he thought that Mr. Carey saw them too.

Always at some point in the talk, Mr. Carey would shake out his pipe, pick up his stool and vanish from the wharf. Tony never knew when he would go, but he always went suddenly. With him went Bredon and Ripple, the Baldwins, the Hancocks, the Higfords, the Porkmans, the Baughs, and all Tony's dear ghosts. He would please himself for a while with the remembrance of them before he stumbled back into Arebo, to be cursed and cuffed by Mr. Selwyn for neglecting his duty.

It happened that the Viceroy made a great feast, with men and women dancing in their separate bands and the common sacrifices. It lasted for three days. Mr. Carey was bidden to it, and not in vain; he loved this Prince, who was honoured as much for his conduct and his courage as for his magic jewel and the power lodged in it. Yet, on the second day, he grew intolerably weary; he smelt rain and chose to be at home before the storms burst. They were late that year; there was a famine up the country.

He had come to Arebo in his war canoe. It lay by the quay and, just as he was setting out in it, an excavated tree trunk filled with coconuts and hens crashed into it and stove a hole in its side. The Viceroy would have lent him another; but the Viceroy's men were feasting. Mr. Selwyn, who was by at the time, offered him a factory boat.

Mr. Carey knew very well that this proffer was designed to buy his favour. He received it like a careless magnifico who knows that such services are paid in the taking. Through some unlucky ventures of his own, Selwyn was in debt for more than he was worth to two or three Negro merchants. When that news reached Cape Coast Castle it must prove his ruin; Private Trading was a sin which could not be forgiven to one of the Company's servants. Mr. Carey knew that it had gone there, though he had not sent it himself. He judged that the factor would seek to retrieve himself by some desperate piece of rascality, and saw that he must regard the Prince of Carthage as a desirable ally. He did not propose to be Selwyn's ally; he knew that the factor slandered him in private, and he loved him none the better for that lip-service which he had always had from him when they were together. He took the boat, not as a kindness from a friend, but as a customary tribute from a small man to a great one.

With the boat came Tony Godwin, happy to be in her, proud of his commission, of his two villainous boatmen, and of a rusty blunderbuss which the factor had given him for state. The air was cooler; piled clouds with thunder in them shut out the sun. Mr. Carey and his men were impatient for Carthage. Mr. Godwin's men, sulky and afraid, wished themselves back in Arebo. Mr. Godwin was in heaven; he had never been so far up the river. He knelt in the bows, too busy to enjoy the coolness and the sound of lapping water, consumed with the desire to see some great beast, some lion or rhinoceros,

come down to the water's edge to be shot by his blunderbuss under the eyes of Mr. Carey.

They came round a bend to a fork in the river. Between the greater channel and the lesser there was a spit of pale-coloured mud, and a dead tree upon it standing by itself, white as silver against the forest and the thundercloud. There was something stirring among the branches: a human body, which hung there with its arms stretched out like an image of the Crucifixion.

Tony saw it and, with a sudden cry, pointed it out to Mr. Carey. But Mr. Carey had seen it already. He bade the men hold the boat and slipped the sheath of smooth brown fur off the lock of his gun. Tony watched him prop the barrel on the stern of the canoe, sink down behind it, blow upon the match which smouldered at his wrist, and aim very carefully before he put the spark to the touch hole. Tony had supposed that his mark was one of the great kites that hovered round the tree. Though he would not have begun the rescue that way himself, he was ready to think it the right way; he entirely confided in Mr. Carey. But the bullet left the kites unharmed and lodged in the brain of the human victim. The body leapt upon the tree, the kites shrieked and circled, Mr. Carey cleaned out his pan and bade the men go on.

Then Tony, like a madman, flung himself across the boat swearing and crying, commanding the Negroes and entreating them, in all the words of their language that he knew, to land upon the spit. When they would

not listen he threatened them with his blunderbuss. They grew angry at that, till Mr. Carey himself ordered them to obey the Assistant. This they did at last, though unwillingly, showing plainly by their looks and gestures that no smaller power would have driven them to do it.

Tony scrambled out upon the mud and found himself in Golgotha. Here were skulls and the bones of men; the earth itself reeked and was corrupt with green slime. The body hung limp upon the tree. It was a woman's. Her arms were stretched from bough to bough and lashed there with cords. Her legs were broken.

Shuddering he turned to Mr. Carey. 'She was alive before you shot her. We could have taken her away.'

'I have tried that too,' said Richard. 'They all die. They think their gods come after them.'

'What had she done?' said Tony.

'Nothing that I know of. She was a sacrifice.'

'A sacrifice for the Devil?'

'A sacrifice for the people; they think it brings them rain. It is the custom in this country—you see men hanging on the gallows in England.'

'But thieves and murderers!' cried Tony. 'Not innocent—not sacrificed—to devils.' His knees were trembling under him and his face was green. His eyes implored Mr. Carey to contradict the things they saw. But Mr. Carey said nothing. 'God gives rain,' said Tony. 'How can the Devil give rain?'

If Mr. Carey had an answer ready it was drowned in the roar of falling water.

XXVIII

WHEN the worst of the storm was over they struggled back to Arebo, with the boat half smothered in leaves and torn branches. The rains that year began with more than common violence. Mr. Carey reached Carthage the next day between two storms, to find most of the thatch off his house. There was no putting it back till the weather mended; the wind blew as hard as any he had known, great trees were torn up in the forest and whirled through the air in swathes of creeper. This wind did not blow continually but in great blasts, coming up from the south-east with thunder and lightning and such rain as joined sky and river in a waterspout. After a while the winds abated and the waterspouts turned to a slow deluge. The river rising above its banks laid all Carthage (except the village on the mound) under water. The clearing round the palace was a moat, the courts were turned to lakes. The Carthaginians, huddled together, slept, cooked and ate upon their mud platforms.

Mr. Carey went no more to Arebo; he lay sick with a feverish ague, tossing and shivering on old Don Hannibal's bed, wrapped in damp coverlets under a leaking roof. He did not want for such care as his people could give him. When their decoctions of bark and wild berries worked no cure, they brought in a fetish doctor with his spells and plasters. The canoe men and their wives, and every other person in Carthage that had good lungs,

drummed continually round his bed, yelling with all their force to drive away the fever spirit. When Richard was sensible he saw them about him with the rain streaming off their bodies; but in general he saw other things.

For a dozen years he had not thought of England; it was as though Pepito had made a flaming hedge to cut him off from the first part of his life. To think of England he must think through Pepito, and his spirit shrank from that exercise. Now Tony Godwin had made him a door into England.

When Tony said, 'I remember once bathing in Avon,' Richard saw a clear grey stream and banks of short turf starred with daisies. When Tony said to him, 'You know Ripple, Sir?' he was transported to Ripple. Day and night there crowded before the eyes of his mind a thousand half remembered pictures: long shadows in a green meadow, a bramble spray over a hedge, a pond with a cluster of tiled roofs behind it, a ditch full of leaves rimed with frost. Above all, he saw the hills: smooth Cotswold, ragged Malvern, and many a less eminent mound lifting pasture or ploughland to a quiet sky. He had seen mighty uplands not a year before far to the east of Benin; but he did not think of them; he only saw his own.

As with the country, so with the people; the boys with whom Tony had bathed and fished in Avon were the children of those with whom Richard had bathed twenty years earlier. At times his own friends came into Tony's stories. But he asked no questions about them, for

he did not choose to know what his friends had become, only to remember what they had been before. Above all, he never asked after Christopher Baugh. His England was not Tony's England, a country upon the same globe as Benin, a little farther off than Cormantyn Castle. He was parted from it more by time than by space; and by time he was parted from Kit. In his heart he had never forgiven Kit for neglecting his cause after Worcester fight; if he had been Christopher, and Christopher Richard, Richard would not have been left to the Godwins. Yet he had sent his Kit three letters, one from Carthage and two from Barbados. One, at least, of these letters must have reached England. Since not one had had an answer, he supposed that Kit the prudent lawyer judged that he had already done enough for his old schoolfellow. Kit the boy had been more generous; but that Kit would be dead now and buried in the lawyer. Richard, if he was not dead, was buried, as he half perceived, in a very strange monster. Inside the monster he was Æneas; he knew well that his Ilium had been destroyed, never more would he behold Simóís and the Trojan plain.

As for Tony Godwin, the thought that Tony believed him to be his friend did not trouble him at all. Tony was a Voice, and Tony was that Instrument through which his mother's sin would meet its just reward. Mr. Carey listened to the voice because it gave him back his England; but not by one hair's weight would he lighten the burden of Phillida's son. He did not imagine that his burden

could be lightened. If he had not warned him against the black snakes on the quay, that was not so much because he wished that they might bite him, as because he knew that they could not bite him unless such an end was the judgement reserved for him. He believed himself that the end would be more signal.

Of that Tony who was not Voice or Instrument but a living boy, he did not think at all. Only on the mud spit, by the tree of sacrifice, had he felt a little cold pity for him. Now in his fever, among his other visions, Tony's face, as he had seen it on the mud spit, floated before him with Phillida's eyes staring out of it.

After a while the fever left him. The rain was still falling, but the floods had abated. He had some of the water baled out of his house, and saw that the roof was mended and that the broken walls were patched with mats and hurdles. He went about as usual, though he was still weak and his legs trembled under him. His visions had faded : all but Tony's face. When he lay abed it hung among the shadows in the rafters. When he was drinking he found it at the bottom of his cup. It stared at him between the boughs of trees or floated on the mist above the river. He had been haunted once by Evans's dying looks; that sight, appearing seldom, had caused him intolerable anguish; this, which he saw continually, brought him no pains but those of satiety.

He was not without news of the English factory; except in the worst season, there was always some coming and going between Carthage and Arebo. There were

rumours that Selwyn meant to run away with such of the Company's goods as he could lay hands on; it was supposed that he knew by now what was thought of his conduct at Cape Coast Castle. The French Interloper, which had hung for the last few weeks at the mouth of the river, might give him a passage; if his Bini creditors (some of whom, having trusted him too far, were reduced to the edge of slavery) did not prevent his taking it. One day all Carthage was roused by a great clamour, and the Carthaginians ran to the landing place to receive a canoeful of Arebo men. These, by their gestures and their rolling eyes, warned the spectators before they could come within earshot that something extraordinary had happened. They had come from the Viceroy with news for Mr Carey.

Selwyn had improved upon Richard's plans for him. Leaving the factory goods, which were more bulky than precious, he had prevailed upon a slave woman to rob the Viceroy while he slept of that green jewel with which the King of Great Benin had invested him. But while he was stealing away with it, his departure had been discovered by one of his creditors who was watching the house. He had been followed and overtaken; in the fight he had been killed. The Viceroy's men had brought back his body, with his clothes and the several packages that he had taken with him; but they could not find the jewel, though they had already pulled his house down and sifted it straw by straw.

Mr. Carey, who had seen the ends of two or three

factors already, and thought this one no credit to his country, was more troubled by the loss of the jewel than by Selwyn's death. He knew that it must prove the Viceroy's ruin, he having received it with such ceremonies as made it not less sacred than the customary beads. The Arebo men understood this perfectly; they roared with grief and rocked themselves upon the ground. They had a further message for Mr. Carey : the Viceroy knew very well that he had no hand in this business, but, as every European in the province must fall under suspicion, he begged him to make his house fit for defence.

XXIX

WHATEVER thunderbolt was prepared against Carthage would not fall upon it yet. While his people mourned with the Arebo men, Mr. Carey went down to the river.

The clouds had slipped away and it was such an evening as left him half in love with the rainy season. Now his principality was El Dorado. The sun, slanting through the branches, turned the leaves to emeralds ; the depths of the forest were blue like a sapphire, its steamy fog wreaths were opals shot with fire. The birds with their enamelled plumage matched these glories; the apes that flung themselves through the dripping boughs scattered a diamond shower. The shrill, harsh cries of bird and ape were not amiss in this bright-coloured Paradise.

Among the rainbows he saw Tony's face, still green and staring. The Viceroy's messengers had brought no news of Tony; he had vanished like the jewel. Mr. Carey was not greatly troubled by his disappearance, he knew that he should hear of him again; but the face did trouble him. He remembered an old story of a Negro bewitched and made mad by a face that hung in front of him so. The Negro had thrown himself into a well to escape from it. Mr. Carey was not ready for that, but he had grown weary of the face and knew too much to disbelieve in witchcraft. He wondered whether Tony might not

be in league with a wizard. Without Tony, he had many enemies who would joyfully have put such a thing upon him. If one wizard had put it upon him, another might take it off. Mataion had an uncle who dealt in such spells, but Richard would not tell Mataion of this business; already the Negroes believed that his fever had been sent to him because he had disturbed the Rain Sacrifice; if they heard of this new misfortune, they might, for all his care, contrive some sacrifice at Carthage. The fever still hung about him, and he resolved to think that these dreams were part of it; no witchcraft could touch him whose trust was in Providence.

But, though Providence might order his affairs and those of Tony Godwin, he was still uneasy for the Viceroy. The people of Great Benin, though they believed in a God who created the world, could not believe that He concerned Himself with His creation. They did not make their prayers to Him, but to a host of spirits and devils; and were so far from the doctrine of Predestination as to suppose that any man might prosper if only he had wit enough to bribe and cajole the spirits. Mr Carey, who knew that the Covenant (as it was expounded in the Gloucester pulpits) was too narrow to contain such a multitude of Heathen, partly inclined to their opinion. He wondered if his friend had not offended some malignant ghost.

His feet led him down to the creek; if Carthage was to be attacked, this was the place for an ambush. The trees grew close together with high grass between them;

trees and grass were very green now and the water, black in the shadow, was golden in the sun. On the ground, at the water's edge, Mr. Carey saw Tony's face. Its eyes were shut.

The eyes being shut made him look at it twice. While he was looking they opened, the face moved, and he saw that there was a body attached to it. Tony lay half in the water and half on the bank with a fallen tree pinning him down. A small canoe floated bottom upward a few yards from him. Tony had capsized it and had pulled down the bank and the tree trying to scramble ashore. Tree and rotten bank had made a trap, and the trap was prepared for Phillida's son.

Tony struggled in his trap like a bird caught by the legs. He called to Mr. Carey, holding out something which he clasped in his hand. 'The Company—Selwyn said—it is for the Company.'

Mr. Carey stooped and took the packet. 'It shall go,' he said, 'where it belongs.'

Tony was satisfied for his charge, but not for himself. 'Oh, Sir! I thought no one would come. Can you move the tree?'

'No,' said Mr. Carey.

'An inch would be enough. It is a little tree.'

Mr. Carey said nothing.

Tony said: 'Fetch some one quickly—don't leave me long. And water—give me water first—I can't reach it.'

Mr. Carey said, 'No. I will not help you.'

Tony stared at him.

'I knew your father and mother,' said Richard. 'They sent me here.' He would have said more, of a Judgement, and of pits which the wicked dig for themselves, but he was weary of Tony's face. He turned and walked away. There was no anger in his heart, there was even a little pity; but his pity was swallowed up in a wave of thanksgiving. He could have exclaimed with John Evelyn, who saw the smoking quarters of the regicides carried home in baskets, 'O the miraculous Providence of God!'

At Carthage he opened the packet and found, as he had expected, a red leather bag with the Viceroy's jewel inside it. He saw that the jewel was not an emerald but a piece of green glass. Though this would not make it less precious to the Negroes, who did not so much regard the substance as the spirit which they believed to dwell in it, yet his awe increased when he looked at the toy for which Selwyn had thrown away his life. He called for the Arebo men and delivered it to them, sending them home joyful, with Mataion and five or six soldiers for a guard.

When they had gone he ate the supper which Domingo's wife had cooked for him and sent for his chess men. He had a new slave, a quick-witted boy from the Brass country, whom he hoped to make into a player. But his mind that night was not on the game; it strayed to Tony. He wondered by what death Godwin's son would die; whether a leopard or a crocodile would find him, or a

host of wandering ants; or whether he would lie there until the leeches sucked his strength away. With these thoughts he grew restless; he would not cross the purposes of God, but he would seek to know them. At about eleven o'clock he took a broad knife (for he seldom carried a gun at night) and went alone to the creek.

Except on the river there was no mist, which seemed to him almost a miracle in that season. The moonlight was golden and clear enough to read by, it made bright patterns below the forest trees. The frogs were awake and, a long way off, a little wild ape was wailing to itself. Though Mr. Carey had heard that cry before it filled him with intolerable pain, for he thought that all the anguish of Pepito was in it.

He went to the creek and found Tony there with the moon shining on him. He was still alive. He did not look like Phillida now; he looked like Tom Evans.

He felt Mr. Carey lean over him and began to mutter and cry out, but not distinctly, for his tongue was swollen with fever. Then he saw who it was and fell silent, staring up with such a look of horror as struck Richard to the heart. He saw himself then as Tony saw him, as a monster of unnatural cruelty like Ezekiel Boone. He saw what the Coast had made of him; it had turned him into Ezekiel.

With this, and the confusion of his thoughts, (for he still partly believed that the boy was Tom Evans,) he forgot the God with whom he had walked for so long. He put forth all his strength and tore away the tree.

As soon as the tree was lifted Tony, who had no power now to help himself, slid backwards into the water, and Mr. Carey could barely drag him out of it. His own strength was almost at an end; he had not tried it so since his fever.

XXX

TONY lay for a time at Carthage with a broken leg. He never once reproached Mr. Carey for the business by the creek; if he remembered it at all he thought of it as a dream. His leg mended quickly, but he did not go back to Arebo; there was no factory left for him to go to, and Selwyn's creditors must prove uneasy neighbours to him. He liked Carthage better; indeed he was as happy there as ever he had been in his life. He had grown a little in his sickness, which was a great satisfaction to him, and he was secretly enchanted to find himself the Company's only agent in that part of Africa. He was a man now, he had no more pots to fill, nobody called him 'Brat', and he could talk to Mr. Carey every day.

He abused that privilege more than a little; Richard was drowned in the ocean of his talk. Harrison was a talker, but he had something to say, and he was never at Carthage for more than three or four days in the year. Some of the Negroes were great talkers, but they talked to each other. Tony could not wholly relieve his soul except in English, and, in all Carthage, only Richard understood that tongue.

Every day and at every hour of the day Mr. Godwin rehearsed his opinions and the great events of his life. His opinions astonished Mr. Carey. Tony had conversed much with a certain young gentleman, a Hobbist and a philo-

sopher who had lately turned the brains of all ingenuous youth upon the banks of Severn. From this Solon he had learnt to esteem the mathematics above every other branch of knowledge, to honour the great name of Descartes, (though he could not give Mr. Carey a clear account of his system,) and to regard ancient learning as a mere school pedantry. Of Justification he never spoke, nor of Foreknowledge, nor of Grace, nor of Works. All that he swore by was the Plain Sense of the Matter.

Witchcraft he called a childish superstition, the doting fantasy of ignorant old women. When he found Mataion's brother talking to a paddle into which he had enticed a spirit, (promising it a coat of red paint, which spirits love, if it would help him well,) Mr. Godwin thought that the best joke that he had heard for a twelvemonth. Richard warned him not to laugh out loud, for these Negroes were a proud people, not apt to endure mockery. Tony thanked him for his warning and promised to remember it; but he forgot it and came to no harm, for they liked him very well.

He had an active, idle spirit. As soon as he was better he teased Don Hannibal's parakeet till it left the back of the old Prince's chair, which had been its home for fifteen years, and found a new perch on a rafter. He fed the ant lion, who lived in a hole by one of the pillars, with so many insects that it grew sick and prudently retired. He made a popgun and shot away the green and white mancala beans at every bird, ape or squirrel that strayed across the roofs. He made the boys as idle as

himself, kept the women chattering round him, interrupted the old men with foolish tricks and questions, and changed that court, which had always been kept sacred to the Prince and his grave familiars, into a general rendezvous for all the frivolous and trifling persons in Carthage. With all this he adored Mr. Carey, and copied him as far as he was able in every article but silence.

As for Mr. Carey, where Tony was concerned he was own brother to the ant lion; though he could not escape their tormentor as easily. The Sense of the Matter was not as plain to him as it seemed to Mr. Godwin; yet, though he sometimes wondered what Stephen and Phillida thought of their child, or how such a heretic should spring from that religious bed, he was less troubled by Tony's opinions than by his stories. These stories were mostly of one Phil, who hated Latin, liked to go fishing and was punished once for riding a horse bare-backed. Mr. Carey at last conceived a regard for Phil, of whom Tony always spoke without approval but with a kind of unwilling admiration. Other names came into his histories; once he said, 'When I was at school, a boy called Kit Baugh——'

Mr. Carey exclaimed at this. 'Kit Baugh! I was at school with Kit Baugh!' he cried.

'Not with Kit, Sir. He is younger than I.'

'Then with his father.'

'His father is called Roger, Sir. They live near Tewkesbury, at Twining, in a house called Abbot's Court. I remember once——'

'Then with his uncle, a lawyer—perhaps now a judge.'

But Tony had not heard of such an uncle.

The next day he said, 'You were asking me about Kit Baugh. I remember now that he did have an uncle called Christopher—a soldier. You can see his grave in the churchyard on the right as you go in.'

'His grave? Is Kit dead?'

'He was killed, Sir, at Worcester, fighting for the King. I think that he was fighting for the King—Kit told me once that the Baughs were always for the King.'

When Mr. Carey exclaimed again, Tony grew positive. He knew that grave well; he had been whipped for playing leap frog on the tombstone. Richard was forced to believe him. He had lived for a great while nearer to the dead than to the living; as Mataion had his father Matoo, and the other Carthaginians their dead parents or brothers, with whom they were accustomed to take counsel, whom they furnished with news, and whose company was a continual solace to them; so he too had his kindly ghosts. But Christopher Baugh had never been among them, for in Richard's thoughts he had been alive and prosperous; and he was dead and forgotten already, with the cause for which he had died. In his thoughts Mr. Carey had often reproached him; now he reproached himself for those old reproaches. And being dead, he was far from Richard; for Richard had been dragged back into life.

He was very kind to Tony out of remorse for his first

cruelty, and his own forbearance bred in him a liking for the boy, who was an honest boy, kindly and brave enough. He did not think of him now as Phillida's son; more particularly as Tony, in all his flood of words, spoke seldom of his father and never at all of his mother. Yet he was thankful when his guest resolved to go to Cape Coast Castle to give his account of the business at Arebo. There was a ship at Agatton which might carry him there, and Agatton being not far removed from Benin City, Tony hoped to visit that place before he sailed. He had heard much of its wealth and vastness, its broad streets and its daily markets, its nobles all in gay coloured silks; of the King's house, with its gate tower sixty feet high and the great copper snake hanging on the roof, with its courts wide enough for an army to drill in and all its treasures of bronze and ivory. Mr. Carey had seen these marvels, and Tony longed to see them too. He set out with Mataion's brother and a dozen Negroes, all very finely dressed. He himself wore Selwyn's red coat, which had lately been sent to Carthage. It was too large for him and was marked at the back by a great brown stain, with a hole in the middle of it repaired by Domingo; but there was no other coat in Carthage, for Richard had none. He furnished him instead with a present for the King, and a Negro sword with a leaf-shaped blade by way of a weapon. Tony begged hard for a flintlock pistol, but Mr. Carey refused it, for he remembered the blunderbuss and thought that the boy would be safer without it.

When Tony had gone he left behind him an intolerable silence; there was nothing but the noise of parrot, ape and crocodile; of drum, harp and Negro conversation. He had gone, and England with him; but Richard was no happier. He was weary of malaget and of roasted yams. He began to loathe the tangled waterways, the land encumbered with tree trunks, the high grass and interlacing creepers, all shot through with spears of burning light. His dreams now were of hills and empty pastures; he was sick with fever again, and he would not go to bed because he was weary of sickness.

There was trouble in one of the three villages; the chief man there had died and his wives were suspected of poisoning him. They must all be tried by the fetish ordeal, which was no more than that every one of them must pull nine cock's feathers out of a clod of earth. Those were judged innocent who plucked out the feathers easily; and the fetish priest, who stuck those feathers into the clod, secretly greased them for such as he favoured. This was an old law, made before Don Hannibal's time, which he had kept as a piece of state policy; for, the woods being full of poison berries, it was held by his wisest Negroes that the women and slaves (who all devoutly believed in the fetish) could only be restrained in this manner from poisoning their lords whenever these displeased them. Richard kept it too, but he always watched the trial himself to make certain that only those who might reasonably seem to be guilty should fail in it.

This time, for a miracle, no one failed, and the friends

of the dead man were filled with despair; they were sure that someone was guilty and they thought that if no one were punished some great sickness or other misfortune would overtake them all. They made so much to do that Mr. Carey flew into a passion, which was a thing which he had not done more than four times since he had been in Carthage. While the villagers trembled before him he remembered Don Hannibal, how he had raged and stormed in the last part of his life until all his people laughed at him.

When his business was over he would not wait to go back in the cool; he resolved to walk off his fever. Like Agag, he walked delicately, lest the Negroes should see him totter. He remembered that he had not had his full strength since the beginning of the rains, and he began to despair of it. His limbs were on fire, but he foresaw a shivering fit, and he wanted to be home before that came on him, to take the one medicine that he trusted in ague : a bowl of brandy fortified with grains of Paradise.

He came to his house at last and found a knot of men round the gateway. They were his own men. The chief among them pressed forward to speak with him, but he would not stop to listen. Everything seemed to be moving round him; if he fastened his eyes on any object to steady it, it immediately grew very large or very small. He came into his inner court and saw an English-woman in a grey dress sitting on the mud platform. She got up and came out of the shadows. She was Phillida.

He put his foot in the ant lion's den and crashed to the ground.

XXXI

WHEN Richard came to himself he lay in his great bed that had been Don Hannibal's. He thought his sight of Phillida a delusion, until he found a young lady standing before him. When she perceived that he was sensible she began to speak: 'I am grieved to trouble you in your sickness, but I must ask you, Sir, is Mr Anthony Godwin here?'

'He is gone. I will send for him.' Mr. Carey called to Domingo, who stood at the foot of his bed, and bade him send for Tony.

When he had finished, she had more to ask. 'I thank you, Sir; I must trouble you further. Will you command your servants to furnish all necessary things for me and for my father? He is an old man, and has travelled too far already.'

Mr. Carey told Domingo that the lady and her father must have all that they desired. While he spoke she watched him and he her. At first he had thought her a stranger, but when she turned to leave him with a brief formal courtesy, he dragged himself up upon his elbow and called after her. 'Stay!' he cried. 'I know you; you are Phillida!'

'That is my name, Sir.'

'Sir?' said he. 'Will you profess that you have forgotten me? You know me well; I am Richard Carey.' So he began to upbraid her; but, the fever gaining

upon him, all his reproaches turned to a babble of Portuguese and Negro words and he fell into mere raving. When that left him, he saw Domingo with the tears rolling down his face, and his fat wife rocking herself with grief. Without heeding them at all he sent for the Englishwoman. 'Phillida, why did you leave me?'

'I have come back, Richard,' said she.

She sat down at the edge of his bed, and he, not trusting her to abide there, held her fast by the hand. So they rested for a long time while he lay between sense and raving. Once he said, 'You have changed your hair, Phillida, since your godly Colonel had you.'

She replied, 'No Colonel ever had me, Richard.'

'But you were married to him.'

'No, I was never married. I am still a maid.'

Again he said, 'You know that I have always loved you, Phillida. Since the time that we walked in the garden and you kissed me, I have never thought of any other woman.'

She said, 'I tell you truly, Richard. Except in the way of kindly affection, as to father or brother, I have never loved any other man.'

These answers filled him with extraordinary happiness; for all his pains he thought himself in heaven. But once he said, 'Phillida, why did you send me to Pepito?'

She replied, 'I did not send you there, Richard. I think that it was Hookey Martin who sent you.'

This troubled him; he had never heard of Hookey Martin, and he could not guess why this man should be his enemy.

Only once did Phillida speak of her own accord and not in answer to him. She said, 'Richard, if you have any rooms in your house, I pray you tell your people that I must have one of them for myself.'

He ordered Domingo to find a room or build one.

So they passed the night. Waking at dawn, he found her by him holding out a cup that he might drink; but before he could taste of it she was torn from him and engulfed in a wave of angry black faces. After that he was very ill, and the drumming and screaming were louder than he had ever heard them.

When he was better he found that the posts of his bed, and the broken cross beams where a canopy had once hung, were tied about with charms against evil: a crooked stick and a bat's skull, an antelope horn and the bones of a snake, a bunch of feathers, a dried lizard's egg and a string of beads. He saw among them a little leaden saint which belonged to Domingo. Domingo's crucifix hung upon his neck and there was a snake's skin twisted round his ankle. He concluded that he had been thought in imminent danger of witchcraft. Mataion, who had been at Arebo at the beginning of his sickness, was home again; but he could not tell who else was about him, for the part of the court where he lay was screened from the rest by straw mats hung between the pillars. This displeased him, for the air enclosed between the

mats was very close and he commonly lay in the open; but his servants refusing to move the screen, he was forced to endure it as well as he could. He was too weak for questions, and lay without dreams until Tony came back.

Tony was grieved to hear of his sickness. He wished that he had known of it sooner, for there was a Dutch physician on a ship at Agatton who could do him more good than these savages. For himself, he had seen Benin City and had a thousand marvels to tell of it. All his journey had been prosperous, only he had been delayed on his way home. But that story must wait; he had just learnt that his father was in Carthage.

Mr. Carey remembered all that had happened at the beginning of his sickness.

'And Phillida is here! Phillida Wilcox!'

'That was my mother's name,' said Tony.

'She is here?'

'No,' said Tony, 'she is dead.'

These words threw Richard into the most frightful apprehension. He remembered the shouts and the drumming and how she had been torn from him. He stared at the feathers and the snake's skin, and perceived that the mats had been put up to guard him from the evil eye. The evil eye would be hers. He remembered the fate of witches and lay back gasping, with his face deadly pale and the sweat streaming down it. Tony hung over him terrified, calling for Mataion to help him. But when Mataion came, with his rectified brandy, Mr. Carey

shrank from him with looks of horror. He dragged Tony down to him and whispered in his ear : ' Did they kill her—Phillida Wilcox ? '

' No one killed her. She died when I was born.'

' She was here. I saw her here.'

' There is no one here but my father and my sister.'

XXXII

THERE was nothing Tony wished for more than to present his family to Mr. Carey. As soon as Richard could move, he must come round the screen to that part of the court which they had made their own. He came at last, with his beard newly combed, in a fine Hollands shirt with lace ruffles, and a velvet waist cloth fringed with gold. He wore no stockings, for there were none in Carthage, but his feet were thrust into velvet shoes made by Mataion's wife after the pattern of those that Don Hannibal was burnt in. This was the dress which he always wore upon extraordinary occasions; if Tony's friends did not like it, let them not come to Africa.

Round the screen there were store rooms swept out for sleeping chambers, and mats hung up between the pillars to keep out the glare of the sun. There were mats, too, upon the floor; and the only table he possessed, and his ivory stool, and Don Hannibal's great chair. In the chair sat Colonel Godwin. On the stool was his daughter with her tambour frame.

The old man tottered to his feet and bowed to Mr. Carey. 'Mr. Crosby,' said he, 'my daughter tells me that we have been very troublesome to you. I trust, Sir, that it will not be for long—we will not trouble you a great while. My son will provide a house—very soon, when he can provide a house. Your kindness to my children——"

When his civil speeches became troublesome, his daughter gently drew him back into his chair, while her brother led Richard (who leant upon his shoulder as the Colonel did upon the chair's arm) to the platform by the wall. When they were all seated there was none to discourse but Tony.

He discoursed, and Mr. Carey watched his father and his sister. The first was a stranger to him; this tedious, mild old man was not his enemy. Here were Colonel Godwin's features with no blood behind them. Those eyes, once so sharp, were pale now and filmy; and the square hands that hung empty on his knee were veined like a woman's. Phillida's husband, running through his vital strength, had fallen early into the extreme of age. What he had become was no more to be blamed, for what he had once done, than Tony himself could be.

But Phillida lived in her daughter. This girl's face, bent above the tambour frame, was a shorter oval than his Phillida's had been. Her hair was crisper and more golden, her mouth curved more, her brows were straighter, and her eyes (which he thought the worst fault) were blue instead of grey. Yet, in the turn of her neck, in the motion of her hands, and in all her carriage she was Phillida. When she stood she seemed neither as tall nor as slender; but he fancied, when she crossed the court, that there never had been but one woman in the world who could walk so. She was stately too; but while Phillida Wilcox had been stately as an angel, Phillida Godwin seemed no more than a fine lady.

She was so fine that he began to wonder whether this could truly be the woman with whom he had conversed in his sickness. He remembered that they had exchanged such mutual vows of love as now astonished him. He began to think that these had been a dream. To try her, he asked suddenly: 'Who is Hookey Martin? As I remember, you told me when I was sick that it was he who sent me into Africa.'

Tony burst out laughing. 'Why, Sir, has Phil been at her tricks again?'

'What tricks?'

'Hookey Martin is her familiar; he is like those spirits that your people here converse with. Hookey is a great sinner; she invented him. If ever a cake was stolen, or a dish broken, or a pinner torn, there was always Hookey Martin who had done it.'

Phillida appeared for one moment extremely discomposed; she looked at Tony as though she could have boxed his ears, then recovered herself, smiled at Mr. Carey and replied, 'I think, Sir, you mistook me then for another woman. Hookey has helped me in so many scrapes that I thought it no great sin to invoke his name when I was truly innocent.'

Tony laughed again. 'Hark to Phillida! Invoked him, as Catholics do their saints!'

Richard did not laugh; he was half dazzled by the blueness of her eyes. They were very light and sparkling when she smiled: blue stars in her white face. That face was not a dead white as Tony's had been when he was

sick, but a lively white, like a flower. Her cheeks were not white at all, nor her mouth neither. While he stared at her he had time to admire her prudence; he remembered that when she vowed she had never loved another man, she had never said a word of loving him. She had been dexterous; she had chosen her time, in her great peril, to get a room and every other thing which she desired. He wondered if she knew what the peril had been. To try her again he said, 'Why did you offer me that potion?'

'It was to do you good, Sir. It was an infusion of Jesuit's bark.'

'If I had died, they would have taken it for poison.'

'I gave it to you to keep you alive. Without it, if you had died, I should have had the blame. When you fell, they thought I overlooked you.'

Tony flung out his arms: 'What, will you set up for a witch? Remember at home how we saw them once ducking old Mother Crumble.'

Phillida did not laugh, and Mr. Carey saw that she had not forgotten it. He honoured her courage; but, for all that, and her prudence, and her dainty, fine colours, he did not like this Phillida. He had time to understand the grounds of his dislike; until the Colonel seemed to be a little recovered from the fatigues of his journey, his children would not venture to remove him from Carthage.

His daughter very frankly made Mr. Carey acquainted with the state of the family. She seemed to understand it

better than Tony did. She talked with him as with Tony's friend who had seen the world and could advise her in ordering their affairs. It was she who ordered them; she did not profess to lean upon her father. As for Tony, he had wit enough, she said; with more industry or better luck he should have been a scholar. He still might make his way in the world by some other road, but he was a child still; he was not fit for Africa. Her uncle had told her that the Coast would make a man of him; she knew now those that went there so young seldom lived long enough to profit by their lesson. She designed to remove him from the Company's service, to have him settle in some merchant's house at home, where his knowledge of the African trade might yet bear fruit; though, indeed, she thought him too easy by nature ever to make a great fortune through any trade.

Her father she could not bring home again; he was a fugitive, condemned as a sharer in that plot of Henry Cromwell's officers in Ireland. That he was innocent, poor man, none could doubt who saw him; but, in such sad times as these, some out of the losing party must suffer; she had heard that it was the same in Rome in Sulla's day. She designed now to take him to Geneva; the people there were well inclined to Commonwealth men. She would never have carried him into Africa but that her uncle, who was wise enough in general, had spoken of this Coast as an Earthly Paradise, filled with all delectable things; his brain, she thought, was quite turned with reading the new African Company's Pro-

posals. Besides, she owned that she had wished, with her own eyes, to see how Tony did.

Tony was not always grateful for her good wishes; he was continually led by her, but she hurt his pride, both as a man and as the Company's one factor in the coasts of Great Benin. Her government was arbitrary, and he had been taught all his life that in her behaviour she was too much a boy. Now, to these faults she added more : some stately airs not to be endured in the sister of a young gentleman bred in the country. He told Mr. Carey once or twice he was sorry that his aunt had taken her to Court.

Richard was at one with him. He had been bred himself with the Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia to teach him how women ought to be regarded; but, besides his dislike of the sex, he had lived for a great while now in a country where they were slaves rather than queens. The Negro women were serviceable drudges; besides their housekeeping, their cooking, and the care of their children, they tilled the ground and went to market, despatching all this business for their masters very briskly and with a great deal of pleasure. Phillida could be serviceable too; she mended Tony's shirts and smoothed them with an iron on Mr. Carey's table; but she must be thanked and praised for everything she did. She was only one year older than her brother and no better born than he, but she must be treated with no less reverence than ever Don Hannibal had been.

She would not have thanked Mr. Carey for comparing

her with the Carthaginian women; she could not abide them. She had a perpetual feud with Mataion's wife. Mr. Carey was welcome, if he pleased, to taste what came out of the black woman's pot, but she would not touch a mouthful of it; she, God help her, had seen what went into it. She liked the others no better. For all their toil she thought them idle; she said that there were no webs in their houses but what the spiders made there. When Mr. Carey, to confute her, showed her the striped cloths they wove, that did not excuse them; if they wove, they had not the common industry to cut their cloth into garments. Besides, though she wore her own dresses cut much lower than godly women did when Richard was a boy, she was scandalized by the Carthaginian fashions; she could not believe in the modesty of women who went bare to the waist. She liked nothing that these people made, except their soap, which she confessed was good. It was a pity, she said, that they did not make more use of it.

The men, she said, had one virtue; they were one degree less shocking to look at than their wives. She allowed them no other. She declared that her own blacks, hired up the Coast, were as thievish and cowardly as any rascals in the world. She would never have got them to Carthage but that she had had her father's old pistols to threaten them with. She could not believe that Mr. Carey's rogues were any better than hers. Only for Faithful she professed a kind of liking; he was so extremely ugly that she could not think of him as a man at all; he was a new kind of ape, a charming monster.

For all her talk of the idle Carthaginians, she was at heart as idle as her brother. She spent whole mornings throwing stones at a mark or fishing with him in a canoe. When they quarrelled she boxed his ears; her state came off like a garment and she was too careless to wear it for ever. For all their quarrels they liked each other's company; though Tony might rail at her, when she was with him she led him by the nose. But they could not wholly enjoy each other's company unless Mr. Carey would endure Colonel Godwin's; for Phillida most strictly observed one piece of filial piety: she would not leave her father with the Negroes. With Richard she thought him safe, and her constant cry was, 'Mr. Carey, if it's no trouble to you, Sir, will you keep your eye upon my father? I must walk a little in the air.'

So Richard smoked a pipe by his old enemy while Atalanta ran races with her brother along his sacred path beside the river. It was no trouble to him; he had such thoughts as kept him well content. Though he did not like this Phillida, he saw that with all her faults she was a desirable woman. He began to understand what kind of satisfaction the Lord might intend for him.

XXXIII

Her faults, indeed, made her the more desirable; there was a woman whom he need not fear. He confessed now that she was beautiful; but, though her beauty might entice him, she could never, while he considered her faults, get interest enough in his heart to break it.

She was his for the taking; he was absolute Prince in that part of Africa and, when once he had resolved to possess her, neither Tony nor Colonel Godwin could keep her from his arms. When she flew about the court, making a dish on her aunt's recipe, shaking out the mats and exclaiming at the lizards, scolding Tony and laying down the law on a thousand points of which she knew nothing at all, with a curl of bright hair loose upon her shoulder and some new grace in every motion, he knew that she was a bird in his net. If that knowledge sometimes made him dizzy, he was never drunk with it; he was an old experienced huntsman who had taken many fine creatures. This one had some delicate plumes that might spoil with rough handling; they should not get it from him; for patience was his own virtue, and he knew how to use it. He was visited, from time to time, by some odd thoughts; but, though he proposed to avenge himself through Phillida, he did not choose to see her hurt or frightened. There was no need to hurt or frighten her; he foresaw that, with their present way of life, she

must drop into his mouth like a ripe plum. The mother had refused him, but the daughter could not. She was a year or two younger, perhaps, than the Phillida who had so cruelly used him in Gloucester: younger and as fair. It was not Tony's face that he saw now among the rafters, but only Phillida's; and her eyes were not grey but blue.

He could not tell how far she guessed his designs. She used him with a noble show of freedom, claiming his help in such and such matters as though she had been an Empress and he her trusted counsellor. Yet, when she was with him, she commonly wore those Court airs which Tony hated, as though she trusted in them, as in a fetish charm, to protect her from him. He, who knew the weakness of her armour, spared her at times a little pity, as he might have spared it to any other enemy who came with a stone and a sling against his long gun. Even with him she sometimes declined into a kind of innocent wildness, with something less of Venus in it than of Diana. This, though he found it much more taking, seemed to put her further out of his reach. He was ashamed at times, as though his enemy had been a child. But Phillida was not discreet, and her eyes were more reckless than her tongue.

As their parents had avoided the imputation of worldliness, so did the brother and sister eschew that of religious hypocrisy. Tony was not pleased that she should escape it as well as he; he had been taught by his philosopher that women need religion to keep them virtuous and,

though he did not truly doubt her virtue, he thought her want of religion a reflection upon his own manliness. Once he told her very seriously, in Richard's hearing, that with so little piety she never could hope to catch a husband.

Upon this, her wit quite conquering her prudence, she flung Mr. Carey such a look, with so much of understanding in it and so much of good humour and merriment, that he thought his battle won. 'Why, let her try it,' said he. She blushed, and he could not tell what the blush meant or whether it had any meaning at all.

She was stately and civil the moment afterwards. She said that her head ached that evening and that she would not go out on the water as they had all planned to do. Tony said that he meant to take out his father; she must stay at home alone. But Richard said that she need not be alone ; his head was aching too.

Then she said she would go after all, the air would refresh her. Mr. Carey supposed it might also refresh him; and they all set out together in his handsomest small canoe with no Black but Faithful.

Richard commonly sat in the bows to manage the boat in the African fashion. She feared, perhaps, he would do it that day, for she settled herself in the stern with mats for cushions. But if she supposed that her father and brother would sit between them she deceived herself; Mr. Carey, leaving the bows to Tony and Faithful, set the Colonel with his face to his son. He himself sat with his back to the Colonel at Phillida's feet.

They travelled slowly upstream. Faithful was quite out of humour. He idled as much as he dared while Tony, beside him, dipped a paddle in very exactly and admired the water sliding off it. The Colonel dozed upon his mats. Phillida leant back against the sternpost which, as the habitation of a spirit, was dyed with chicken's blood and hung about with accory beads. Mr. Carey resolved to build a new canoe, with a sternpost of ivory carved (as well as his ivory cutters could achieve it) with grapes and centaurs, like the stock of his gun. But the best post that could be had in Carthage must seem barbarous when she leant against it.

They were floating now in the shade of the trees and she had thrown off her hat for coolness. The gnats, who devoured Tony, did not trouble her; they did not like the essence that she used. Only a few bright wings hung round her like a halo. Still she seemed resolved to be stately and not kind; she let him see that she had thoughts of her own and that they pleased her better than his thoughts. Yet, stately though she was, she loved to feel the water, she could not keep her hands from trailing in it. Richard saw them there with a sudden horror: he knew what waited for them.

'Keep your hands in the canoe,' he told her sharply.

She pulled them out and turned away, leaning on her elbow. She was wearing her finest dress, a grey satin: the colour lighter than her mother would have chosen it, the cut much lower. He wondered why she should bring satin to the river and whether it was put on to charm

him. But the set of her shoulders forbade such a notion. She was not in a charming temper. She was as sullen as Faithful; but his back was hunched up with ill humour, and hers expressed all pride. He conceived, at last, that she might wear her satin too as armour against him, and his heart melted a little with pity that she should hope to overawe him with such trifling splendours. It was not her fault that they were trifling; she used the best she had

For that day her armour would serve; he was content to watch her. He could not see her face, for she was staring down the river, but the grey dress showed him the curve of her arm. Her chin had a fine curve too, and the shape of her neck enchanted him. When she leant over the water she cast a shimmering radiance upon it, like that reflected from the breast of a swan. They were floating now along a narrow channel in a very high and solemn grove. There was no undergrowth there at all, but great trees like pillars in a church bore up their canopy of leaves and branches. Only a few shafts of tempered light fell through the holes in that canopy.

Down a shaft came tumbling the petals of a flower, and a scented golden cup lighted on the hem of Phillida's grey gown. Richard saw it; his heart throbbed with joy and half remembered pain. She did not remark it; she was still looking down the river, but the air was too hot for pride. She drooped and changed her posture, giving him, with every change, some new delight. But while she enticed him with her body, her mind was not on him at all. Soon he saw that she had forgotten him,

she was watching something darting on the water. It was a swallow.

There were often swallows on that part of the river. The sight of them, especially since Tony's coming, carried his thoughts to Highnam pond where, as he had been told long before, they slept all the winter. He supposed that her mind made some such journey.

He was right. She turned with a want of caution that rocked the canoe, set her back to the sternpost and began to talk.

She said that her uncle had a new coach, a French one, not like those lumbering wagons some people chose to be carried about in. She wondered, for her part, how ladies could endure them; they made her think of Noah and his ark. She said that her uncle's footmen wore a livery much like that of Lord Brounker's people, and that a fellow who had a grudge against one of Lord Brounker's footmen had run a man of her uncle's quite through by mistake. She was sorry that they could contrive no way of laying the dust in Hyde Park.

Her uncle, she thought, would be Sheriff next year. She talked of the dinner at a new Sheriff's that he had once taken her to. For herself, she did not love that kind of feast; she liked best a modish entertainment. She talked of her friends about the Court and of the entertainments they gave her.

She was half a courtier herself, 'or a courtieress,' she said. She had kissed the Queen's hand not six months before. She said, 'The Queen is a little black woman

scarcely as high as my shoulder. But the King's face is worse than hers, though he is a tall proper man. He is no more lovely than '—she stopped, looked at Mr. Carey, shifted her glance to Faithful, and continued—'than your monster there.'

Tony was displeased with her for chattering. He wanted to fish. 'The King finds some to love his face. 'Tis known that all you courtieresses——'

'But not I, Tony. I am for the Duke. He is more the fashion now than his brother. So brave; and handsome too. A god, I vow.'

'Oh, Phil!'

'Like a Roman god upon a ceiling—in a fair periwig. And you know what they said of him at Southwold Bay.'

So the courtieress ran on while they left the forest and came out into a lake fringed with tall rushes. Water and sky were rose coloured; they floated in the glow of sunset. Phillida was Venus, shining with a rosy light.

Mr. Carey was telling her so, in the words of the *Æneid*, when he was interrupted by a great clatter. A flock of cranes rose out of the marshes and, circling, climbed into the upper air. Here, when they caught the sun's last rays, their plumes changed to flames of fire. She stopped him with a gesture and stared up at the miracle. Then she began to talk very fast of the rare birds in St. James's Park, and of a crane there that had broken its leg and wore a wooden one made by a soldier.

She went on from history to history and came at last to the fire of London. Here Tony forgave her; his

philosopher had seen it, and he longed to tell what he knew. But Phillida gave him no chance. Mr. Carey listened to neither of them; the destruction of his London was nothing to him then, he was thinking only of Phillida. He, who had watched the ways of man and beast, understood her very well; she was frightened. With her histories she was building a wall to protect herself from him; she piled it up faster and faster because she knew that it was weak. Uncle, King, Duke and Court ladies, coach, feast and cranes, were her allies called in from a thousand miles away. They could not help her; Mr. Carey was King and Duke in that part of the country and he meant to take her whether she would or no. But, while he loved her body, he had a kind of tenderness now for her spirit. He had honoured her courage, he was sorry to see it crumbling away.

They went home by moonlight; though, indeed, there was little light upon the water. When the rosy glow was out, she glimmered like a white moth. She talked all the way, her voice a thin, high whisper in the forest and her laughter breaking in a whisper among the soaring pillars.

She was restless, and again her hand strayed into the river. Presently he snatched at it with an exclamation; there was a mighty clash of teeth and a great snout crashed upon the side of the canoe.

'Damn you, Phillida!' cried Richard, and broke into reproaches that surprised himself. Faithful began to chatter and beat the water with his paddle. Tony dropped

his paddle, looking for his gun. The canoe swung round upon a fallen tree trunk.

By the time that it was straight again and all the shouting over, Phillida seemed to be asleep. She lay curled up with her hands before her face. But once, when they crossed a bright patch of moonlight, Richard saw a shining tear run down between her fingers. He could not comfort her; he believed that she saw in him an uglier monster than the crocodile.

XXXIV

HER tears confirmed his resolution; but from that time there was less of revenge in it and more of another passion. He knew that, however she might look upon him, there were worse monsters in Africa than he, and that Tony and the Colonel could not protect her from them. He would protect her. His thoughts strayed down the paths of honest marriage. Since his training in the laws, both of England and of Africa, had given his mind a bent that way, he occupied himself with drawing up a settlement.

As for Phillida, she shed no tears the next day. Mr. Carey was not a monster, but her friend again and the best defender of a helpless family. She herself was not the Court lady, but partly a housewife and partly a child. She sang foolish ballads while she smoothed Tony's bands.

Tony was going to Cape Coast Castle upon the Company's business. He had other business too, whose whole scope he revealed to Mr. Carey: at Agatton he was to find a ship which would carry his family. When he had found it he must come back for the Colonel and Phillida; the sea air would do his father good, and they had trespassed upon Mr. Carey's kindness for too long already. This was Phillida's plan, and she had strictly forbidden her brother to tell Richard of it. But Tony did not like her plans, he would have chosen to leave his family at Carthage. He thought that

his father was not strong enough to bear the voyage and that Cape Coast Castle was no place for Phillida; in his heart he was afraid that she would transact his business there for him.

Richard was extremely angry; she meant to cheat him after all. He had designed to ask for her before Tony left, to settle one-half of Don Hannibal's treasure upon her, and to offer Thomas Pearson, the Chief Factor, land and materials for his new warehouse cheaper and better than could be had at Arebo. The price which he had intended to ask for that land was no more than that the Company should keep Tony as sole factor in Benin. Tony himself should have carried the letter and brought back a chaplain for Phillida's wedding. Chaplain, treasure and her brother's promotion were the price that Richard had planned to give for her. He would not pay it now. He would send for a Jesuit from Awerri after Tony had gone; if, indeed, he chose to make her his wife who had deceived him already. He might take her without any marriage at all, as he had at first proposed to do.

For all his anger he was wary; though Tony rebelled against his sister, he must in the end take her part. He could not prevail against Mr. Carey; but Mr. Carey had a kindness for this fool, he did not choose to knock him on the head. There would be no knocking on the head when Tony came back from the Coast; it would be too late to make trouble then. So Richard did not ask Tony for Phillida; he only said that there was no profit in arguing with a woman.

Tony was charmed; his Philosopher had told him the same thing, and he himself had never been able to argue with Phillida.

Richard advised him not to argue. He could go to Agatton and take ship there, sending her word that he had judged it best to go alone. Tony liked this plan very well.

The last evening before he went, brother and sister found a new diversion; they danced together some of those new French dances that she was always plaguing him with. Since they could not dance without another couple, they took for their vis-à-vis two of the carved posts on the path by the river. Tony chose the Lady Shocking and Phillida Sir Frightful Bogy. They had no music but that of Faithful's drum, with which he was very ready to gratify them, for he was pleased with Phillida, divining that she did not love the Carthaginians. But he could not play on it entirely to her liking: first of all he beat it too fast, and then he fell into a doze and scarcely beat at all.

They danced gaily at first and then with more gravity. She forgot to make her curtsys to Sir Frightful Bogy and turned upon the arm of a man who was not there. Tony passed and turned before his visionary ladies. He was earnest in the business; there were other ladies, not less visionary than these, whose hearts he hoped to wound at Cape Coast Castle. Richard watched them dancing. He sat upon a log with his back against a tree trunk.

This was a stately dance, slower and more formal than any he had seen before he left England. Tony wore the scarlet coat with which he hoped to charm Thomas Pearson, and Phillida had on her flowing satin. She carried a flower in her hand. Shafts of sunlight, stealing through the branches, fell now upon the flower and now upon her hair. A voice behind Mr. Carey said :

> 'Their port was more than mortal as they stood;
> I took it for a faery vision
> Of some gay creatures of the element
> That in the colours of the rainbow live.'

He looked up and saw Accepted Harrison.

Harrison stared at the brother and sister with the pupils of his eyes narrowed like a cat's.

'Richard,' said he, 'I ask your pardon, I am at your feet; I took you once for a fool.'

Mr. Carey had always found that simple violence was good enough for Harrison. He replied, without turning his head again, 'If I find you alive in Carthage when this figure is ended, you may call me a fool still.'

The figure was not a long figure, but when they had danced it Harrison was gone. Mataion told Richard later that the Trader had come to Carthage. He had barely touched at the landing stage, going on before his canoe men had time to refresh themselves. Richard knew that the game had only begun; those other monsters were closing round Phillida. He had no time for more patience.

He improved upon his first plan; he made Tony take with him Phillida's Coast servants. She resisted this; they were not honest, but they spoke between them a few words of English. She would rather be lied to in her own tongue than jabbered at in no language at all. Besides, though they were rogues, they were not Carthaginians.

She could not use this last argument with Richard, and he did not use any argument at all. He ordered one of his people to pick a quarrel with her headman. They fought, and the strangers clamoured to be gone. She was left alone with her father and the monster.

XXXV

The next two nights Richard spent with Phillida, but not in the manner that he had once intended. When his son had gone, Colonel Godwin was taken with strong inward pains which, continuing till evening, left him so weak that he could scarcely move. For two nights and the best part of two days he lay between pain and sleeping, and in all that time his daughter scarcely left him. It was true, she said, that the Negroes might mean him no harm, but she would not have him wake among outlandish faces. Domingo seemed to her no better than the rest; for he was half a heathen and the other half Popish, which, she said, her father never could abide. Only in Mr. Carey did she repose her trust; while he was watching she dared, once or twice, to rest for half an hour.

For the most part she sat by the bed, with a bunch of feathers in her hand to keep the flies off the sick man, and Richard opposite to her. On the second morning they sent after Tony. Phillida was sure that he would come, but Richard was not. He remembered his own counsel and wondered if the boy had sailed already. Harmattan was blowing; by day the sun was blotted out and at night the lamp streamed sideways in the north wind. Phillida rejoiced in the moving air (which brought her at first an illusion of coolness) till she felt the sting of the fine, cruel dust. She did not com-

plain, but she screened her father from it as well as she could.

About the middle of the second night, he became so far sensible of his condition that he roused himself to give Phillida his blessing and to commend her, in a very solemn manner, to the protection of Mr. Carey, whom he still called Mr. Crosby or Mr. Cresswell, the name Carey wholly escaping him. Soon afterwards, falling back into his delusions, he seemed to take Richard for Tony, blessing him as a son and conjuring him (now that he was so nearly a man and had his sister to provide for) to put away childish things.

After that he fell into new pains and then into a sleep; and died at last so quietly that Richard and Phillida did not at first perceive what had come to him.

When she understood that he was truly dead she was persuaded to take a little sleep. Waking an hour before sunset, she went out to breathe the air with Richard.

They walked upon the south side of the palace, sheltered from the wind. It was an ugly place enough; dust devils swirled across the clearing and the mounds of filth and garbage were half hidden by the drift. Mr. Carey remembered the horror that had fallen upon his spirit the first time that ever he saw it, with the bones, the slimy pools and the birds of prey. There was no pool now; but the vultures, sitting in the shelter of the wall, shuffled from under his feet like huge, obscene barndoor fowls, and he feared at every turn to see a bone. He wished that his people would bury their dead friends; a stranger

who did not know their customs must look on them as ogres.

If Phillida had seen a bone she did not speak of it. She was pale that day and heavy eyed. Grief made her face seem thinner; she was more like her mother now than he had ever known her. She was in a heavenly frame, which made her more like still. She talked of her father who, she said, had been a kind father to her. She knew that he was called a hard man, but he had never been hard to his children. No one, she thought, could doubt of his salvation; if he had been too harsh in the earlier part of his life, the innocency of his later years must have redeemed it.

This was Arminianism, if it was no worse; she leant, he saw, upon Works and not upon Grace. Phillida Wilcox had loved good works, but she never had had the least confidence in them in the matter of salvation; he could still hear her gentle voice expound the doctrine that no works can save those whom God has damned. Phillida Godwin was a schismatic, but her opinions did not displease him. If they were heretical, he thought such heresies becoming in a woman, and especially in a young one.

If Phillida Godwin professed a milder creed than her mother's, she was endued with equal resolution. She cried a little into her handkerchief and hoped that she could bear what God had sent her. As for the burial, she had heard there was one Englishman buried in Carthage already. She wished her father to lie near him. Richard wondered in his heart what kind of

neighbour the Colonel would find in Don Hannibal; but he was willing to please her.

It distressed her extremely to know that her father must lie in that country at all. She said that (as though he had had a foreknowledge of what was to come) he had often told her, when she was a child, that Heaven lay as near to Africa as it could do to England. She believed that saying, but she could not feel in her heart that it was true. Then she trembled and began to weep again, not sobbing and moaning like the Negro women, but shedding a flood of tears, silently, as she had done in the canoe. His sleeve and part of his shirt were wet through with them, for she shook so much that he was forced to put his arm about her.

She was in his arms, but she was safe from him that day. He could not take her while her father lay still unburied. He began to doubt, indeed, whether he could ever possess himself of her. He had known from Harrison's looks that what he had then proposed to himself was a breach of generosity and of that honour in whose light he had always lived. He truly pitied her now. He remembered Tony's face upon the bank of sacrifice and knew that Africa was not for her. Yet he loved her and he could not let her go. He might take her, perhaps, to some other country, where he could ask for her and she receive his suit with less constraint than she must suffer here. But if he died now what would become of her? And if he lived, how would she regard him?

He stood like a tree till she governed her tears, when they went back into the palace.

XXXVI

PHILLIDA GODWIN, worn out with grief, fell asleep early. She woke early too. She would not lie in bed and brood upon her pain; she went out alone through the wicket gate to see the sunrise. The business of the day had hardly yet begun. Hers was mourning: a heavy business, and so new to her that she could not bear its weight without some intermission. She was very sorry for her father's death; but looking back on the last years of his life, she felt that he had been dead for a great while already. He had been no more than a walking monument of the father she remembered. She left these thoughts behind her in her bed; she snatched her holiday.

Harmattan was still blowing and the air was full of gold and crimson motes. Faithful, sitting on the river bank, cleaned his fish like a saint in glory. She smiled at him and went to peer over the edge; she hoped to see a crocodile, believing that, on such a morning, he would wear golden armour and eyes that shone like coals. Though she hated crocodiles she dearly loved a rarity, and a golden crocodile was a rarity to her.

She found another. There was a tree on the bank which glided suddenly into two parts. One of them became a small slight gentleman, very richly dressed.

Because she was afraid of Africa, her first impulse was to run; she had confidence in her own legs. But when she saw that the stranger was a European she

took him for a friend of Mr. Carey's, come there after she had gone to bed. She perceived that Faithful, whom she thought of as a kind of watchdog, was not at all troubled by the sight of him. So she waited to see what he would do.

He flourished his hat and made her a very low bow, sweeping the ground with the ends of his periwig. She made him such a curtsy as she thought the bow deserved.

The stranger said, 'You are Mistress Godwin? My dear, I was once acquainted with your parents.'

Though he called her his dear she was not offended; he spoke like an old civil gentleman. His face was an old face under his periwig, and his eyes, which were very fine eyes, gave her no more than the praise which was her due. She was used to such eye-worship and had learnt to be best pleased with that which asked her for least in return. But, after her curtsy, she stood waiting for him to declare himself further. He was not unwilling to do it. He said, 'Mistress, you do not know my name. It is Harrison. I was once a gentleman in Suffolk—that was before your time. I am now a poor prisoner upon this coast.'

She would not contradict him, but she could not keep her eyes from straying to his coat. He saw them turned that way and smiled. 'A man must go decent,' he protested.

She remembered then where she had heard a voice like his before; it was that of Mr. Baxter, the famous divine, to whose sermons she had been taken when she

was a child. That voice charmed her now. Here was a man who had known her father, and whose misfortune, perhaps, was the same as her father's, since he called himself a prisoner. He was a man, too, of good fashion : a circumstance which did not at all displease her. He might help her in her perplexities, at least he had a story in whose telling she could for a little while forget them. She said, with some inward trepidation, (for she had been strictly taught to honour age and gravity, and there seemed a want of reverence in playing the Court Lady to a man like Mr. Baxter), 'Your decency goes richly, Sir. I think that coat was made in Paris.'

'Maybe it was. I won it off a Frenchman. He was a larger man than I. Observe the skirts; the cut is reckoned pretty at Loanda.'

It struck her then with a strange kind of wonder to hear Mr. Baxter's voice speak of gaming with a Frenchman. But she had grown too well-bred to show her wonder; she remembered that she was a courtieress. 'They have taste at Loanda, Sir. That cut is wasted here in Carthage.'

She was sorry for that speech before she had finished it; she was opening the way for a compliment, and she was not thinking at all then of compliments, but only of Faithful with his dozen rat skulls threaded on a string. She said very quickly to stifle the compliment, 'Your business brings you to strange places.'

'I earn my keep, Madam,' he said. 'My master has business with Mr. Carey.'

'You know Mr. Carey?'

'I have known him for twenty years. We were once engaged in the same service. He has prospered since then. He is Fortune's child.'

She turned her eyes again to the coat.

He said, very soberly, 'I trade for my master.'

'And who is he?'

'A Negro called Mundoo.'

'A Heathen?'

'Madam, I should not have told you that. It was Mr. Carey who sold me to him.'

'What do you mean?'

'It's a long story.'

'Tell it to me now.'

'A long story, princess,' said he, 'will you sit to hear it?' He waved his hand to that log which had been Richard's seat when she was dancing, and Phillida sat down upon it. Mr. Harrison leant back against a tree trunk to watch her at his ease.

'At Worcester Field—and that's before your time again—Richard Carey and I engaged in a venture on the King's behalf. We were caught and our punishment was transportation. I was carried here. It was a pleasant place as such places go: enough sleep and little toil. My master was one Don Hannibal, an old fantastic courtier of King James's time. I never heard his true name nor why he came here. He used me well; I could pass the time for him, as I do now for you. I lived here for two years—till Richard came. He was sick, near dying. It is not the custom here to harbour fugitives,

but—he was my old comrade, Madam. I had power here in those days.'

'And then?'

'Why, Richard is a better man than I.'

'What do you mean?'

'You know the Court, Madam. Can there be two favourites?'

At the Court she knew there were more than two favourites. She grew more incredulous at every moment, and more angry. But an active and inquiring spirit drove her on; she would hear the end of this lie. 'You had a quarrel?'

'We had twenty.'

'And he grew weary of them and sold you to the Heathen?'

'He would tell you so himself. 'Tis the custom of the country; and, I do confess, I owe Richard Carey some gratitude. I have had more kindness from this Heathen than I should have found, perhaps, in any Christian master.'

'That must be believed, since you remain with him.'

'Where should I go? To England? What should I do there? I have been away too long Carey and I, my dear—we are broken men. He went to England a little while ago, and he came back again. He is an old Cavalier; you can tell me best if a Presbyterian is likely to get a kinder welcome. Besides, I do not like the punishments they use for runaways.'

'What punishments?'

The punishment that Mr. Harrison feared was the loss of his profits. He thought that something more was needed here. He knew a story called 'The Jealous Chief and Four Lovers': there were four fine punishments in that story. He began to run through them one by one, adding several novelties after his own fancy.

'Would they do that to you?' she cried, when he had described the first.

'Or this,' said he, and began upon the second. He liked to watch her; she was a lovely creature.

Half way through the second punishment she jumped up with her fingers in her ears. 'Mr. Carey would not do such things!'

''Tis the climate, Madam.'

'He was kind to Tony.'

'That's the climate, too. A man must have company. When I come here with my master's trading, Dick and I are brothers. 'Tis "kind Dick" then and "good brother Harrison"; we love each other rarely. Tony will do well enough here—till they quarrel.'

'Why should they quarrel?'

''Tis the climate, and the want of other company, and hearing the same stories. You will never know how you can hate a man until you have lived with him for six months upon the Coast. I knew your father; and I know the customs of this country. Since you are here, it is best that you should know them too.'

He told her of the country, and of its customs, and of how Richard followed them, until at last she fled.

XXXVII

MR. CAREY was eating a hen stewed with millet served up in a calabash. The Godwins having now taken the whole of his own court, he sat in his second court, which was not so neat. It was crowded with children and poultry and, though the galleries were swept very clean, the part in the middle open to the sky was strewn with all kinds of rubbish, among which the poultry and the kites together picked up a tolerable living.

Children and poultry clustered round Richard, who was diverting himself and them by tossing morsels from his spoon into their open mouths. Upon his knee sat Domingo's little yellow son chewing a drum stick, while an old woman, crouching on the ground behind him, told the story of the Fortunate Hunter who stole the snake's blue amulet. On the far side of the court three girls were chasing each other from pillar to pillar with shrieks of laughter; and a young man, lying stretched upon the mud platform, strummed a plaintive air on a gourd strung with cane. These several pleasures were interrupted by Phillida.

She came in with a swirl of petticoats, her head high and her cheeks in a flame. 'Mr. Carey—— No, don't get up, Sir. I do not choose to crane my neck.'

She swept the children away and stood over him. 'It is only talk—lies, I know. But I must ask you one ques-

tion. It is of a little lean man, an Englishman, called Harrison. Do you know him, Sir ? '

' By God, Phillida ! If he has troubled you——'

' Oh, sit down, Sir. He has not troubled me. Is it true that he is a servant to a Heathen ? To one Maroo ? '

' To Mundoo ? He trades for him; in part. It is the custom——'

' And that you were friends once and both served the King at Worcester ? '

' We worked together.'

' And he says that you sold him to that Heathen—he, a Christian and a man that had been your friend.'

Mr. Carey was justly indignant. He was very angry with Harrison and he did not see why he should be catechized by Phillida. He replied, ' Mr. Harrison, Madam, is an Atheist.'

He saw at once that he had spoken like a fool. Her face turned white. ' One other question, Sir. You owed something to Don-What-d'ye-call-him—the old gentleman that lived here before you ? '

' I owed him everything, Madam.'

' Is it true that you sold the ladies of his family ? '

' Some of them are here.'

She looked round the court with a kind of horror. ' And the others ? ' she said. ' Is it true ? '

' It is true, Phillida, but——'

' But they were Atheists too,' she said, and left him.

Mr. Carey was angrier than he had ever been in the whole course of his life. By what right did Phillida judge

him ? He knew that it was not Phillida alone who judged him, but all England : England, who had sent him into Hell and judged his behaviour there by her own laws. How would she judge his designs against Tony and against Phillida ? He remembered how, when he first came to Carthage, he had seen his own face in a well and had not known it. He saw now the face of his spirit. This girl was a fool; if she took him for a devil why did she provoke him ? She must have the temper of a devil herself if she could not restrain it here. He did not desire her now, he only wished that he need never see her again; she had hurt him as her mother had hurt him in Gloucester. The old wound was open. He could hurt her, but that would be too easy; he foresaw no satisfaction in it. There was only one kind of revenge that he had ever wished to take upon her, and that had been inspired more by love than by hate. He had been betrayed by the weakness of his own flesh.

There was no news of Tony; his father must be buried without him. That was another thing to be laid at Phillida's door; but for his own weakness Mr. Carey might now have been rid of her.

On the day of the funeral the wind blew steadily. A grey pall had settled on the forest, the creeper stems were cracked and withered, the leaves dropped off and there were no flowers to strew upon the bier. The corpse bearers struggled through the dust of the clearing; Mr Carey with them, and Domingo, and his wife. She came out of charity, though as a princess, a daughter of Don

Hannibal's, she had never walked so far since she was born. Almost alone among the Carthaginians she was truly his child: a huge yellow woman, so heavy that the earth seemed to shake under her. Mr. Carey always used her with particular respect; he gave her his hand now, for Phillida could walk alone.

The corpse bearers hummed below their breath and chattered to each other. If Phillida had wept they would have wept too; but she did not weep. Domingo's wife unwound a necklace from her enormous throat and threw it into the grave; she could not leave the dead stranger there without one gift. Phillida gave nothing. She knelt for a moment with her face hidden in her hands, then stood beside the grave while the dust was shovelled in. Her dress was moulded by the wind to her perfect shape. Her face was still, but a little pinched and grey. Mr. Carey judged that the Mulatto was the better woman. He pitied his old enemy who had lived for twenty years with two Phillidas, one after the other.

He himself could not endure her for a week; and, if Tony had really gone to Cape Coast Castle, she might be left with him for many weeks. Revolving this thought in his mind he came to a sudden resolution; he would not keep her, he would take her himself to her brother or send her to the Viceroy at Arebo. The Dutch Factor there had only a mistress, but the Viceroy had many wives who were honourably wedded to him according to the laws of their country. If she objected to the plurality, let her remember Solomon and David. She

would be safe in the Viceroy's house; there was no man on earth in whom Richard had more confidence.

He would not speak of this plan until he had been to Arebo; he set out the next morning leaving Mataion and Domingo to watch over her. Though she did not deserve his care, at least he would keep his promise to her father, his old enemy. He could not forgive her now because, with her empty beauty, she had tempted him to betray his trust.

When he came back to Carthage again he found his palace full of fear and wailing. Phillida had gone.

He heard the story from Mataion; there was nothing to be got out of Domingo, he was too much shaken. Mataion had smeared his great sword with fresh chicken's blood and himself with white chalk, in order to show the Englishwoman that he was ready to defend her. She had tried to go out in the morning, but he had not suffered it; he had told her, as plainly as he could speak, that she must wait until the Tortoise came home. His brothers and their wives had told her so too, shouting to make her understand what they said. She had not heeded them at all. He had been forced to stand in the doorway flourishing his sword, while his brothers behind him rattled their spears. Then she had seemed at last to understand. She had gone into her own room and had drawn the curtain. She had stayed there all day, while Mataion and his brothers stood before the curtain. When they were tired (and they had grown very tired) they lay down to rest in front of it so that no one could go in. (Here Mataion lay down across the doorway to show Mr. Carey how

they had done this.) At supper-time Mataion's wife had gone in to her with a savoury dish of crawfish seasoned with red pepper. She had found something on the bed, but it was only clothes; the woman had gone.

Richard went into the little room. It was very neat, except for the crawfish which Mataion's wife had spilt upon the floor in her confusion. There was a dark bundle on the pillow and a shape under the coverlet. Mataion's wife drew back the coverlet and showed him a cloak bag and other articles cunningly disposed there. Phillida had arranged her bed and had stepped out over Mataion's body while he was asleep.

When Richard saw the cloak bag he was sure that she had not been frightened by the chicken's blood; this was such an idle trick as he himself had played when he was a boy at school. She had not meant to go for long; here was her necklace lying on the bed under the other things. She would not have left such a treasure behind her if she had meant to depart for ever. But it was dark now and she had not come back.

In that country, the laws protecting women were so strict that he knew she could have walked alone in any town there more safely than in her darling London. But there were no towns near Carthage; and outside the towns, even here, she might meet with men who respected the law very little, or with beasts who did not regard it at all. Outlaws and pirates still haunted the marshes, and there were leopards, snakes and crocodiles enough to dispose of twenty Phillidas.

Some boys had seen her walking by the river with a red cloth upon her head; none but Phillida would walk in scarlet with her father scarcely underground. She might be walking in the darkness now. She might have found a shelter in any one of the three Carthaginian villages.

He sent messengers to each of them, while, with all his household, he searched the forest paths by torchlight. They roused the whole country with shouting, with firing guns and with blowing horns. They kept the birds in continual agitation and knocked down a dozen wild creatures. But they did not see Phillida. Only, towards morning, one of the slave women brought Mr. Carey a paper which she had found blown by the wind against the foot of Sir Frightful Bogy. There was writing upon it, the hand very much like Richard's. It was superscribed to 'Mistress Ph. Godwin' and ran, 'Tony is sick—follow the bearer—thine, R.C.'

XXXVIII

THERE was only one man in all Africa who could have played such a trick; Mr. Carey guessed very soon how the note had come. He ran to the creek and found marks in the bank as though the sharp prow of a canoe had lately run into it. Near by, behind a root, in a place sheltered from the wind, there was another mark which might have been made by the heel of a shoe. Water and blowing sand hid the rest.

The Brass country was, in a manner, tributary to Great Benin. Richard Carey was at peace with Great Benin; if a woman had been stolen from him its laws would give him redress. Harrison belonged to Mundoo's house; and, if Richard could prove that Harrison had stolen her, he could claim from Mundoo either the woman herself, or another woman of the same value, or other goods of the woman's value, or the woman herself with other goods too as compensation for any damage which she might suffer while she was stolen property. The affair would take a long while to arrange; but a Prince of Carthage, helped by the Viceroy at Arebo, could put such arguments before the Brass elders that he might hope to make a good profit out of it.

Richard did not even consider this plan; his thoughts ran in other channels. Since Carthage was at peace with Great Benin, Harrison would very likely avoid Benin City; but there was nothing to prevent him from taking

Phillida to Sokoto or Kano. Though it was not lawful to carry men slaves out of Benin, there was no law against the trade in women. But Richard did not think that Harrison could intend to sell Phillida at present.

North and east the country was more thickly peopled. To the west was a network of lagoons and channels, with islands of good ground, like Carthage, set among the mangrove swamps. Richard supposed that Harrison would travel west. He sent a message to the Viceroy requiring him to seize such of Mundoo's people as should come within his territories. He himself launched his two great war canoes and filled them with his soldiers.

His armada was afloat by sunrise. Soon afterwards he had a great piece of good fortune; he encountered a fisherman who, having been passed in the night by a fleet of three great canoes and many small ones, had known it for Mundoo's fleet when he saw the light of torches shine upon the Long Bright Gods, that pair of Dutch cannon which the Brassman had lately acquired to the admiration of his countrymen.

Mr. Carey was enchanted. It did not trouble him that Mundoo should have more canoes than he; the trader would have many women with him, and some of his men were not fighters. He hurried to the channel which the fisherman had told him of, and found a trail of hen's feathers floating on the tide.

This channel was one in common use, but the trail of feathers soon turned up a side creek and began to twist among the narrower watercourses, as though Mundoo's

fleet had doubled like a hare. These watercourses were half choked with dead timber, and so shallow in places that the men were obliged to get out and push their canoes off the mud banks, finding a dangerous foothold among the slime and rotten branches. From several marks Mr. Carey perceived that other crews had lately done the same thing. He rejoiced, for he knew that Mundoo's canoes were heavily laden and that this business must have delayed them.

When the hens' feathers came to an end another sign was not wanting. From the time that they entered the narrower channels Mr. Carey had seen a scarlet rag left here and there, now on the thorns of a creeper, now in the hanging strings of a mangrove root. At first these rags were good strips, now they were merely a silk thread or two, as though whoever put them there grew parsimonious. They were all on the left side of the channel, low down near the water. Mr. Carey followed them religiously; he knew by their colour and their texture that they had been torn from Colonel Godwin's military scarf. He set a boy who had keen eyes upon the prow of his foremost canoe and bade him watch for no other mark.

Other marks there were, as when a company of men, women and children have been dragged through narrow ways. Here were boughs of a creeper torn down and smashed with an axe: here were fruit rinds in the water, and a broken paddle, and black crisp hairs in the bark of overhanging branches.

But the scarlet threads were Phillida's, and Richard

knew that they were set there for him. He had forgotten his anger; he remembered only that she was in danger and (since he had seen the letter) that she had run into it through her faith in him. Here was another proof of her faith; in that hideous maze she had hung out her little flags that he might follow them.

They had left the forest, with its dusty creepers, and had come out into the swamps. The mangroves still kept their dull green leaves, a camp for flies innumerable, but they gave no shade; the glare from the copper sky beat down between them. There was no wind that day; the water lay rotting between its slimy banks and the air lay rotting between the walls of mangrove. From the mud stirred up by the paddles rose an intolerable stench.

The Carthaginians toiled and grunted; their bodies streamed with sweat. They had not brought enough clean water to refresh themselves, and thirst itself rebelled against the water from the swamps. Mr. Carey urged them on; he himself took a paddle. The second canoe followed close behind him, for Mataion and his brothers burned to recover their lost credit.

Richard could guess where the scarlet flags would lead him; there was an island of firm ground hereabouts that had once been peopled. The tribe that inhabited it had left it in a time of pestilence, holding the soil accursed; but their wells and their palm trees still remained there. This was the only place where Mundoo could encamp.

The island was defensible, for the banks were steep, but Richard did not think that it would be defended.

Phillida's beauty was not of a kind fashionable near Benin, and even Harrison could scarcely hope to persuade the Brassman that she was worth a quarrel with Carthage, with Arebo, and perhaps with the English African Company as well. He might think it worth his while to steal her away secretly; but, if such a thing came to be talked about, he must lose his reputation as an honest trader. Mr. Carey did not expect to have any trouble in rescuing Phillida; but he thought it due, both to her and to himself, to get a very large present from Mundoo as compensation for the insult which had been put upon him. He knew that Mundoo would not part with such a present without a little drumbeating and argument.

With such thoughts, he swept from the oven of a narrow channel into the furnace of a wide one. The water here was like a sheet of molten metal, and the island with its tall trees, now only a few hundred yards away from him, could scarcely be seen in the glare; but his ears were assailed by the sound of drums and war horns, by war shouts and the screams of women. They were there, and their scouts had perceived his approach.

His plan was to make a show of attack, charging at the bank and heaving to just out of reach of their assegais. He did not want any accidents; if a man were hurt, either on his side or on theirs, it could only lead to more delay before the matter was settled. He gave the word and his people charged, Mataion's canoe racing beside his. The canoe men forgot their weariness, they grinned over their paddles and shouted across to each other. At the right

moment, they swung the boats round and stopped them broadside on to the shore. Mr. Carey's herald, in his high feathered cap, with a tabard of bead work hanging to his feet, stood up in the prow to shout to the people standing on the bank. His voice was loud, but not very clear. Mr. Carey was debating in his own mind whether he had chosen the right man, when a large iron ball rolling from the sky knocked a hole in his canoe. The canoe began to sink and, while she was sinking, another ball smashed her prow.

Mundoo had had his Shining Gods for two years (he had taken them from a Bristol privateer in payment of a debt) and in all that time they had never once spoken. Mr. Carey was so much used to thinking them dumb gods, only meant for show, and so certain that the trader did not mean to fight, that he could not imagine at first how this misfortune had happened. When he did understand it he was not pleased; he shouted to Mataion to make for the bank and himself, plunging into the water, swam towards Mundoo's craft, which were all empty and moored in the stream.

While he swam he was in some danger, both from bullets and from an ill-directed flight of assegais. One of these found a mark. He had nearly reached the boats when he heard a great splutter behind him and, looking round, saw one of his best fighting men slowly drowning, with blood flowing out of a wound in his throat. Mr. Carey was dragging his long gun with him; he was desirous of saving it, for he knew that the Negroes

regarded it as his own fetish god. But, though he had not far to go, he could not swim with that great tube and with Arachee too. He dropped his long gun into the river.

When he got Arachee to the canoes he found that most of his men had reached them already. They were protected now by the bank; but the bank was their worst enemy. It was of crumbling red mud, very steep and high. There was a path up it, but they could only climb this one at a time, and Mundoo's men were at the top of it. Richard saw that it was time to go. He bade his men unmoor Mundoo's canoes and made off with them for the swamp at the back of the island, hugging the bank which, with its thorny scrub, protected him from spears and cannon. Only one small canoe was left behind; it was so small that he thought the enemy could do little with it.

In this fight he had lost one great canoe by the cannon ball and four men by wounds and drowning. He had won three great canoes and eight little ones, the enemy's whole fleet. Yet the victory was Harrison's; Mundoo's fetish gods had spoken, Mr. Carey's was in the river. And the man whom he had saved at that price was visibly dying.

Richard was troubled; he knew the value of reputation to a governor, and though he had never held his gun in that same superstitious awe as the Negroes did, yet its length and breadth were familiar to him, and he had carried it for so long in a country where even metal is thought to have a soul that he had come to have a kind of affection for it. If he had been a talking man, he might

have conversed with it as Faithful did with his paddle. But his loss of it was no more than the shadow of his true misfortune; in his secret heart he knew that he truly had forsaken his God. For nearly twenty years he had waited for a Judgement upon his enemies; he had had an assurance that their sins would be visited upon Phillida Godwin. They were visited upon her now; and out of pity, engendered by a carnal love, he strove against God's faithful justice.

He was troubled again because he knew that this was a case for patience, and he could not exercise patience when Harrison was with Phillida upon the island. He resolved to try that same stratagem by which he had defeated the pirates. The daylight was spent in exploring the swamps. After sunset he attacked the island.

The great canoes were sent out with two men in each of them and the leakiest of the small ones tied empty behind. They had each a flare, set in the prow, and a screen of brushwood to hide their want of a crew. One of Mataion's sons commanded them; he was to pass slowly before the island, drawing fire, while the other Carthaginians, in two regiments under Mr. Carey and Mataion himself, attacked it from behind. Most of the small canoes were with them, for the swamp here was more water than mud.

This plan miscarried because the Brassmen would not look twice at the great canoes. Besides, Mataion attacked too soon; he and his men were cut to pieces before Mr. Carey, who had farther to go, could come up with them

on the island. The Carthaginians fought well out of affection for their Prince, but they did not want to take Phillida back, and they were discouraged from the beginning. Mundoo's people fought with the most devilish fury; even the women were animated by that same heroical spirit.

Mr. Carey, having discharged his pistols, laid about him with a great cutting sword. He was met by a Negro as tall as himself armed with a hanger. While he was engaged with this enemy, a wounded Brassman tripped him by the heels, and, while he struggled to his feet, there came a black virago who felled him with a cooking-pot.

XXXIX

WHEN Richard began to come to himself he lay at the foot of a tree. He could move neither hand nor foot; his body was a fort whose garrison held not more than a corner of it. He sent out scouts to explore the outworks, but they came scurrying home with such an intolerable pain at their heels as engulfed the brain, his citadel. It retreated after a while and he lay still, glad to provoke it no further. But his body being so uneasy a cage, his soul presently left it and began to hop like a bird among the branches. With the eyes of his body he watched it; for his eyes were still in his body, and though his soul could go out of his body it could not see without them.

He thought at first that the branches flickered, and then he saw it was the light which flickered among them. To his left was a broad red light with shadows moving upon it; and he had carried his head a little crooked for so long that when he lay upon his back his face was turned to the left. He could not turn his eyes far enough to the right to see what cast the shadows. As for turning his head, that seemed impossible.

There was a roar of voices in his ears, and one amongst them that he knew, the voice of water rippling very close to him. He began to perceive that the light which he saw was reflected on the water and (since he only could escape from the pain in his body by fastening

upon outward objects) to divert himself by making out the shadows.

The clearest was the shadow of a Negro seated at the foot of a palm tree. He saw that it grasped a spear and wore a helmet with feathers on its head; and he knew that it was a chief. There was another shadow, smaller and more intricate, of something that sat higher on a stool or a tree stump. He saw the shape of a long chin propped on a bony finger. He knew that shadow too: it was the Devil's.

As he lay still the roaring in his ears changed into rational voices. He heard one voice say, 'The Tortoise will die now and his soul will follow me. He was a great chief and he never did me any harm. All this is your fault.'

The other voice replied, 'His soul will not stay here. It will go to a place called Heaven. It will wear a white robe, and play upon a harp.'

The first voice said, 'He is a chief, not a musician. Why should his soul play upon a harp? You tell me nothing but lies.'

The other said, 'The Jesuits at Awerri would tell you the same thing. Heaven is reserved for men like Richard Carey. It is a fine town. Its streets are paved with gold. That is why all Europeans love gold so well.'

'Certainly your soul should be content there.'

'My soul will go to Hell, which is a different place, but just as far from this country. We do not belong to this country; why should our souls remain here?'

'Don Hannibal was one of you; yet he has been seen here. He walks in the forest with his leopard.'

'Those who have told you that story are ignorant men or great liars. Besides, he did much evil in his life; he could not go to Heaven. But Richard Carey was a just man. They will be glad to have him there.'

They were silent for a time, and the first voice, which was the Negro's, spoke again. 'If his soul goes away, he has friends alive who will make trouble for us. The Viceroy at Arebo will be angry and the English Company will be angry too. Besides, all this will make a great deal of talk in the country. People will say that we are thieves. It will be bad for trade.'

'Why should they say so? You can say that you bought her from Mr. Carey and that you quarrelled afterwards about the price. Everyone knows that he tried to sell her to the Viceroy at Arebo. As for the Viceroy, he is sick; perhaps he will die.'

'If he dies there is still the English Company. Everyone knows that she belongs to them.'

'I will tell you how you can please the Company. You must give her to me. If she is married to me they cannot make trouble for you, since I am her countryman.'

'Why should I give her to you? I have given you three wives already and they all complain of you. This is a trick. You took her without asking my leave. You told me that any European would give me a cargo for her. I will give her to that new captain with a beard like an Arabeck's.'

'If you show her to Captain Castel he will give you nothing at all; he will certainly say that you have stolen her. Let me have her. I will pay you myself.'

'You will cheat me as you always do. Besides, I think she would not go with you. Let her come here and we will see what she says.'

Richard tried to move his head, but the pain made him dizzy. When his brain was clear again there was another shadow on the water.

The devil was speaking in French. Richard could not follow him. There was something about a king who drank blood out of skulls. He grew dizzy again trying to understand.

A voice cut across the French, a voice like heavenly music and shade in desert places. It said, 'Sir, you terrify me' (but it was a proud voice and not at all terrified). 'Your king is a strange kind of monster. Yet, I will go to him.'

Harrison said, 'You fool! Do you suppose that you are going to Whitehall?'

Phillida said, 'I know that I am in a strange country. Yet I would rather trust a king, though he were a savage, than you whom I know to be a villain. For one thing I do owe you thanks.'

'You confess that much?'

'I do confess it. You told me that Mr. Carey had done you a great wrong. You have taught me that he used you too kindly. I will believe that Don Hannibal's ladies were no more deserving than you.'

'Mr. Carey, Madam, used you too kindly if he let you run on so. There is no question here of benefits to be received by me or conferred by you. I can save you from a fate so bad that your innocence cannot conceive of it. These things may not be shouted, even in a desert. Do you know what they will do?'

His shadow came closer to hers as though he would have whispered in her ear. He had no time; her shadow flew out like a windmill; two claps like pistol shots rang out through the glade, and she had boxed his ears as Mr. Carey had once seen her box Tony's. But she had struck Harrison much harder than she ever struck her brother; his shadow toppled over.

The Negroes laughed, and Richard with them. He was too weak for laughter; he fainted again.

He woke tormented by thirst and flies and by the sunbeams slanting through the boughs. Then came Phillida with a jar of fresh water and a palm-leaf fan. His Purgatory turned to Paradise.

The Negro women helped her to wash his wounds. They had raged against him like Furies the night before because they had been persuaded by Harrison that he would take a fearful vengeance upon them if he won. Now they were afraid of what his spirit might do to them if it left his body. They placated him with gifts of fruit, with mats to shield him from the sun and cloths to lie upon, imploring him not to torment them or their children when he was dead, but to go back to that place to which he belonged.

He had some flesh wounds and his right hand was torn, but his worst hurt was in his back, where he had no wound at all. Only he could not move his limbs nor turn his head without intolerable anguish. So he lay still and Phillida sat by him. It was like the time that he had lain sick at Carthage; but now he had no fever, and little pain except when he moved, only a kind of numbness. Presently the women left him alone with Phillida.

She told him that Mundoo had gone hunting and that he had taken Harrison with him. They could not leave the island; they had some canoes now, but not enough. She said that Harrison had told her she should be taken to a king in the north—she could not remember his name, it was none that she had ever heard before. She believed that God would not forsake her there; for we are taught that the hearts of kings are in His rule and governance, without any distinction of white kings or black Very learned divines had told her that the kings in Scripture were certainly black; or, at least, a dark brown. He might dispose the heart of this king to send her home again.

She said that she had been deceived by Harrison's lying letter. In the canoe she had understood the trick that he had played upon her. When their canoe joined the fleet, Mundoo had not been pleased to see her in it; but Harrison had talked him down. He was a cunning villain, but she did not fear him; she had a pistol hidden in her petticoats. It was a little one, a Spanish toy that her uncle had given her in jest at parting, but she thought that it was big enough for Harrison.

Then she began to speak of other things, of a pretty ape that the women had, and of how they made aprons of beads very artificially threaded in a net. While she talked he was content; but if she fell silent for a while he frowned and tried to speak himself. Then she sang to him and stroked his cheek with her fingers. So they passed the day between talking and sleeping, in the shade of their tree, which was a wild plum tree, sacred to lovers.

At sunset she left him. There was a great deal of shouting and crying, the earth was shaken by running feet. The cries did not cease after the fires were lighted; they continued all night, with such shrieks and wailing as made him suppose that some great thing had happened. He himself was forgotten; no one brought him water, and the ants ran across him without his being able to brush them away.

At last, when the stars were pale and the fires burnt low, he saw Phillida standing over him. The red glow from the embers shone upon her dress and on the pistol which she held in her hand. Its muzzle was smoking. She stood for a moment listening and looking about her, then, thrusting the pistol into her bosom, she stooped suddenly and lifted him by the shoulders. This hurt him so much that he screamed. But Phillida was not a woman to be turned back by a little noise. She stuffed her handkerchief into his mouth and lifted him again. Upon that he fainted.

XL

THE next thing that he heard was water rippling again, but faster now and nearer to him. Then he saw Faithful crouching with a paddle and supposed that he was in a canoe.

He was easier now and could move a little, but he was still so weak and his limbs so heavy that he did not stir them far. He was so weak that he had not sense enough to wonder how he came there. The first things that troubled him were great drops of water splashing on his face. He could not imagine the cause of them, for he knew that the rainy season was far off. After a while he perceived that this rain was Phillida's tears.

When she saw him look up at her she cried out for joy. 'My dear,' said she, 'I thought you were dead.' Then she kissed him twice, which astonished him more than her tears had done, and he lay in her lap, not daring to breathe for fear that his dream should end.

Without his asking her she told him why they were there. 'God sent his elephant,' she said, 'not a common elephant, but a Behemoth with a short nose and a horn in it. It hurt Mundoo; Harrison says he will die. The others killed it and ate it—they would not stop to cook it. I saw them eat their pieces raw, or at best, a little roasted on one side.'

After the feast, while the Negroes lay, 'not drunk, but over-eaten—like hogs,' said Phillida, Harrison had

come to her. Being forced to defend herself from him, she had shot him through the head. Then calling Faithful, who lay hidden in the rushes, she had helped him to carry Richard down to that canoe which the Carthaginians had left.

Richard struggled with a question which he had tried to frame the day before, 'Who fired the cannon?'

She told him that Mundoo had two gunners, a Portuguese and an Englishman. 'And truly, Richard, I did not know there were such wicked wretches breathing. The words that the Englishman used might call down God's judgement upon our nation.'

She could tell him little of the fight. She had seen the dead body of one of his people; she could not remember his name, and the faces of these black men were all alike to her; but, by his necklace of red shells and his pouch of leopard-skin edged with cloth, she had known him for a person whom she had often seen at Carthage.

She could not tell him of the rest; some, she thought, had escaped and some she had seen as prisoners. These Richard knew would be safe; a slave trader would not murder his prisoners. Faithful thought that all the Carthaginians were dead; but he had avoided the battle, hanging on the outskirts of the camp without concerning himself with the fate of any creature in it except Richard. He only knew that some of the great canoes had been retaken; he had seen Mundoo's men swim out to them.

All these things Mr. Carey learnt piece by piece in the course of the day, while they floated down the branching

waterways. It was as hot as it had been two days before; but the stench was less, for the little canoe did not stir up the mud as the great ones had done. For food they had millet cakes which Faithful had stolen. For drink they had only one calabash filled with good water. Phillida eked this out by bathing Richard's face with the brackish water of the channels; if she could not allay his thirst she would cheat it. She kept his eyes sheltered from the glare and was vigilant against the mangrove flies.

Thirst and pain were cheated together, and his mind was not yet able to receive that disaster which had overtaken his people. He was filled with happiness. The swamp was a precious setting now for Phillida: a setting worked in precious metals, for the trees were silver and a copper river flowed between them. There were no flowers here, but some little pretty things, a gay-coloured insect or a snake with jewelled eyes. Phillida took them all for rarities; if Richard could not see them she told him of them. They were like two children exploring the wonders of a millpond together.

But the heat of the sun at noon was more than happiness itself could bear. She talked no more of rarities. Richard fell into an uneasy sleep. He woke to see Faithful's head still framed between two walls of mangrove.

When she saw him stir, Phillida gave him a little water and he perceived that the calabash was almost empty. He judged by the slope of the shadows that it must be past three o'clock. He could not tell why they should still be among the mangroves. Phillida herself was

troubled. 'You must speak to your servant, Richard; he will not heed me. You know that I tore up my father's scarf and strewed the pieces to show you the way. We are in that same channel; I can see them now. But I put them all on the left of the channel, and they are on the left side now. I think that we are going back to Mundoo.'

Richard spoke to Faithful and found that he did not intend to take them to Carthage. He was tired of Carthage, there was no need to go back. There were plenty more islands with water upon them, there was plenty of fish; they could live as he and Richard had often done before. It would be better now that they had a woman to cook for them.

All these things Faithful explained several times over in his own language, speaking louder every time lest Richard should mistake him. Richard at last propped himself up with Phillida's help and told him that Phillida would shoot him through the head, as she had already shot Harrison, unless he turned towards Carthage. Phillida herself enforced this argument by flourishing her pistol.

Faithful sullenly turned his canoe and began to paddle more slowly than before. No pistol could hurry him; he was tired, he had worked for them all day. The boat crawled through the water. Then Richard felt both thirst and pain; he feared lest he should die in the canoe and Phillida be left alone with that elvish barbarian.

After a while he remarked that Faithful had quickened his stroke. If he had crawled before, he was racing now.

Half crouching, half kneeling, he toiled at his paddle. Phillida had changed too, she sat very stiffly, her face pale, her nostrils dilated.

'What is it, Phillida? What do you see?'

She smiled down upon him like a mother comforting her child. 'It is nothing, dearest. Faithful thinks that there is a boat coming up behind us. But it may be a boat of our own. It will hardly catch us at this rate.'

Indeed they were flying through the water; but a heavy canoe, propelled by many rowers, would fly faster still. Besides, Faithful could not keep up that pace for ever.

Soon Richard heard a voice shouting in English; he judged that it came from Phillida's gunner, for it used such words as are no honour to any language. There were other shouts too, and the sound of many paddles. Then came a great yell and Richard knew that they were seen.

In this extremity Faithful stopped paddling. He took off his girdle of small skulls and dropped it into the river, telling the water, very civilly, that he would give it greater gifts than this if only it would swallow up the other canoe.

Richard tried to force himself up; the sweat poured off him in cascades. He would have given his soul for one quarter of his ancient strength; but it had gone, and he must lie there like a log, and watch his savage gibbering, and know what was coming to Phillida.

Shots rang out; Faithful swayed and toppled suddenly into the river. The canoe swerved and heeled over; Richard saw the other canoe looming over him, with its

cargo of black faces, plumes and bright weapons. Then his canoe righted itself and flew down a shadowed lane into a great silence.

He had heard of benevolent canoes which, being propitiated with the right gifts, will spirit fugitives away of their own accord. He thought at first that this might be one of them; but he soon perceived that Phillida was driving it along with Faithful's paddle. Here was a way too straight and shallow for the great canoe to follow. Even this small boat slid along as much on the mud as in the water. Often it scraped over roots. Here was a legion of mangrove flies, but Phillida did not regard them. A great serpent hung across the way swinging like a garland from bough to bough. She bent her head and passed under it as though it had been a common creeper.

They came out into a wider channel, but still they were not safe. They heard the old yell and knew that they had only cut off a bend; their pursuers were still behind them.

There was a rattle of shot, but Phillida would not stay. Richard screwed his head round and saw that her cheeks were flushed and her eyes shining. Her hat was off, her hair streamed out like a golden banner, and her white arms flashed against the sky. She was singing between her clenched teeth—

'Let God arise, and scattered
Let all His enemies be;
And let all those that do Him hate
Before His presence flee.'

He had heard her father's friends sing that song at Colchester. He had not liked it then, but he thought it a good song now; he did not remember that it was he and Phillida who were fleeing. He took the mangrove for a troop of Ireton's horse, and was glad to see them there; every other feeling that he had was swallowed up in a kind of glory.

The water washing round him put out his glory; it was rising slowly inside the canoe, whose timber had been bruised by the tree roots. From slowly it rose quickly; they were waterlogged now and sinking fast. By the shouts behind him, he knew how fast the other canoe was gaining upon them.

Some desperate strokes drove them round the next bend. There were yells, shots and a mighty crash. A tide of agony swept through Richard's limbs, and the swamp water closed over him.

XLI

THE *Orange Tree*, Captain Castel's ship, was a prize of thirty-six guns lately taken from the Algerines. Though she was now on the service of the Company and had no commission, she still carried His Majesty's colours. On board the *Orange Tree* Mr. Carey was tried by drum-head court martial as an Interloper and a Notorious Pirate. He was accused too (though these charges were by the way) of poisoning his master and of carrying off a young lady.

From a blow that he had received when the prow of his canoe struck the *Orange Tree's* boat, or from some injury given when he was pulled out of the water, his pains were much increased. He lay on a mattress by the main-mast foot staring up at the rigging: at the sails furled against the yards high above him, at the confusion of ropes and spars, and at the tapering masthead: all gilt now in the rays of the sun, for it was early morning.

He remembered his last trial and how Kit Baugh had spoken for him. Tony Godwin was speaking for him now, but Richard was not thankful. He hoped that the court would finish that work which was left undone at Gloucester. He did not want to be hanged because of the pains in his back; but he wished that, while he lay still upon the deck, his head might be struck off his body with a heavy leaf-shapen sword like the one that Mataion had carried.

Tony spoke with as close a copy of Mr. Carey's voice,

air and carriage as he could reach to. They were not Mr. Carey's, but they became him very well. He looked older than he was, and almost fit to be the Company's sole factor. He swore that his friend Richard Carey had been unjustly used. Mr. Carey had been of material assistance to the Company's factory at Arebo. When that factory was destroyed by the Negroes he had sheltered Mr. Godwin, sending him, with a guard of soldiers, to Benin City to get redress there. He was so far from being a pirate that he had been known, for sixteen years, as the chief enemy of pirates in this country. At his own charges he had destroyed their chief stronghold in this river. As for the charge of poisoning, that was an idle and malicious rumour spread only by such as were his sworn detractors. As for his carrying off a lady, Mr. Godwin was the lady's brother. He was so far from pressing that charge that he acknowledged himself to lie under an eternal debt of gratitude to Mr. Carey. This gentleman had, *vi et armis*, taken her out of the hands of a parcel of rogues who had torn her away, against her will, from that asylum in which Mr. Godwin had left her. As for his being an Interloper——

Captain Castel interrupted him with a rattle of oaths. He hated an Interloper worse than a Turk. If this Carey was not a pirate, nor a poisoner, nor an abductor of women; yet an Interloper he remained, and, as an Interloper, he should swing.

Mr. Godwin denied that he was an Interloper.

Captain Castel was seized with an apoplexy; his eyes

rolled behind the points of his mustachios and he rumbled imprecations. When he had at last subsided, his supercargo, a brisk, civil young man, came to his help. He would not contradict Mr. Godwin, but he held it impossible that a man who had lived and traded in those parts for a number of years, never, as far as was known, paying any toll to the Company, should not have infringed upon the Company's Charter, granted to it by his present Majesty and conferring upon it the sole rights of trade between Cape Blanco and the Cape of Good Hope.

Mr. Godwin replied that Mr. Carey's steward had shown him a Charter granted by his late Majesty, King James I of happy memory, antecedent to the Charters of the present Company and of the two Companies before it. This Charter had been granted to one Hannibal, thenceforth to be known as Prince of Carthage, and gave to him, and to his heirs for ever, the Principality of Carthage in the Coasts of Benin, with the full sovereignty thereof and all the rights and liberties pertaining to it. There was also a will, properly attested by the said Hannibal, bequeathing this principality with all its rights and liberties to Mr. Richard Carey. Moreover, the Princes of Carthage were bound to furnish three elephants to any King of England who came into their country, which was one more elephant than the Company of Royal Adventurers in Africa must present to him in such a case. Mr. Godwin believed that this tribute had never yet been refused. ' And thus,' said he, ' Mr. Carey holds his principality under the Crown of England by petty sergeantry.'

Even the super-cargo was put quite out of countenance, though he said (with all deference to Mr. Godwin's opinion) it was possible that one or both of the documents would prove forgeries. He thought, too, that he remembered a clause in the Company's Charter, 'all previous grants notwithstanding', which might invalidate Mr. Carey's claim.

For all that he could say, the sailors, and even their captain himself, were shaken. The news that Mr. Carey owed the King one more elephant than the Company did gave them a greater idea of his pretensions than any that they had entertained before. They were the more moved when Mr. Godwin cried out with a great deal of passion, 'Sir, you see that this gentleman is innocent. You have destroyed his house, will you murder him too?'

Captain Castel appeared irresolute. He marched up and down with one hand clapped to his sword (as his manner was) and the other twirling his mustachio. Then, 'God damn him,' said he, 'let him go. He will never live to tell tales at home.'

So Richard was put ashore at Arebo, while Tony and Phillida sailed for England in the *Orange Tree*.

XLII

He remained at Arebo for a great while, nursed by the Viceroy's women and by the doctors of most note in that part of the country. These people (besides their plasters and decoctions proper to the climate) used vapour baths, which were no more than holes in the ground, filled with green leaves with boiling water poured over them. They also practised rubbing with certain healing and restorative oils.

By these remedies, or by the mere operation of nature, Richard was enabled at last to stand without pain. Then he desired to visit Carthage; but the Viceroy put him off with fair speeches, saying that such and such times were not fit, that his canoes were not ready, that this was an unlucky day and the next a feast day. But when he saw that Mr. Carey was resolved to go, he suffered it.

When Richard came to Carthage again he found nothing there but a few charred beams and a mound grown over with rushes.

It was a fine afternoon in the wet season, the clearing was a shining lake. As he stepped upon the island that had been his house, a cloud of parrots rose from it with whirring wings and harsh screaming. It was as empty then as Ararat before Noah came there. Only Sir Faithful Bogy and some of his brothers, sticking out of the mud at odd angles, were left to tell him where he stood.

The causeway of logs was gone and the lake was not

in all places deep enough for the canoes. The Negroes whom the Viceroy had sent with him would have carried him through it on their shoulders; but he, detesting that kind of effeminacy, chose to stagger on his own feet, sinking up to his armpits in the deeper holes. He made for the nearest of his three villages. The journey was very troublesome to him; the customary path was overgrown with creepers, and he himself was still so weak that he was forced to lean upon the Viceroy's men.

The village was in ruins. It was vacant like Carthage and partly overgrown with a field of millet which, straying out beyond its boundaries, had engulfed the roofless houses. The great iroko tree, under which the village elders had once sat, was blackened now and spoilt with fire. Mr. Carey, standing underneath its branches, saw dark shapes among the millet stalks. He sent the Viceroy's men away and came out of the shadow of the tree alone.

Then the villagers, both men and women, crept out from between the millet stalks; and with them a shrunken old man whose empty skin hung in pouches about him so that Richard at first did not know him for Domingo. They crawled, weeping, to Mr. Carey's feet; and he wept too, for he still was weak from his sickness and he remembered the old good Prince who had left him these people to govern in honour and prosperity.

He learnt now what had happened after the fight. Very few of his men had come home again. When they did, Carthage was destroyed already. Captain Castel and

his people had landed there not two hours after Richard's departure. Tony being with them they were received as guests, but from guests they had become conquerors. They were quarrelsone from the beginning; palm wine and brandy had turned them into devils. They had looked for a house rich as Solomon's Temple; the mud walls and the thatch had seemed to cheat them. They had come for jewels and gold, but Domingo had hidden both himself and Mr. Carey's treasure. Seeking for the treasure they had smashed chests and cooking-pots; they had hacked in pieces Don Hannibal's ivory leopards, with their bronze spots and golden eyes; they had torn the roof off the house and, at about midnight, either by accident or design, had set the thatch on fire. The Carthaginians, with their strong men away and the enemy already in their courts, were not able to resist them. Mr. Godwin had protested, but Castel's men had only laughed at him.

When the sailors had gone there were others to come after them. The fame of Carthage, of its wealth and of its fall, had spread up and down the rivers, and there was not one bad character upon their banks who had not come gleaning after Castel. The less these people found, the worse they treated the Carthaginians, who, now only a remnant, were forced to hide themselves in the bogs and thickets. Here they were perishing through fear, hunger, sickness and the wild beasts : leopards, snakes and crocodiles, which had never before been so bold or so numerous.

They told their story to Richard. Mataion was dead, and his two brothers, and Arachee, and almost all the

strong men. Their widows had not been kindly treated by the sailors. Now that the Tortoise had come back they thought themselves saved. But he could not bring the dead to life, and he could not restore Carthage.

What he could do for them he did; he gave them to the King of Great Benin. He settled this business through the Viceroy, surrendering his three villages and all the land belonging to them, in return for two cargoes of goats and hens and one of knives, axes, muskets and powder. Besides, the Carthaginians were to be called King's Slaves, like the Benin men, and to enjoy all the rights and privileges belonging to that name.

As soon as the weapons had come Mr. Carey ordered a hunt. Two leopards were killed, with many other animals; there was a great feast, and the boys (the men of new Carthage) danced round the fires. Mr. Carey sat among the old men sucking at a long-stemmed pipe with an earthen bowl.

At dawn he left them and went to that mound which had been Don Hannibal's Carthage. He walked along his crumbling path, where the mist lay thick as wool upon the water. When the sun rose this fog dispersed in painted wreaths that trailed away like ghosts. One of these ghosts was Phillida; like a wreath of mist she had escaped him. He remembered a verse of the Psalms, 'Thou sellest thy people for nought, and takest no money for them'. He had sold his people for Phillida; he had left them for her, as once he had left the Cause for her mother. He lay under the curse of Saul who spared Agag the Amalekite;

the Lord had rejected him and had given his kingdom to another.

He went to Arebo that day and, in all Carthage, only Domingo knew that he would never come back there. The steward brought out that oxhide bag which he had nursed through one whole night: half fainting with terror, half stifled by the smoke, crouching in a hole in the thickness of a wall. This bag was quite filled with gold but little sophisticated. It held, too, in a narrow bronze box, with a roll of waxed silk to preserve them from the damp and strong spices to keep away moth and ant, Don Hannibal's patent and his will.

When Richard saw these parchments he was glad. With them he could confound Castel and the Company of Royal Adventurers. Remembering how Domingo had used him when he went to Barbados, he divided the gold, giving part to his steward and keeping part for himself. His own share he put into three smaller bags for the convenience of carrying it.

Domingo received his share with tears of grief and joy. He would not stay at Carthage; his child was dead and his fat princess had dwindled to a skeleton. He would go to Awerri to the Jesuits; there he and his wife would fit themselves for death and pray for his dear Mr. Carey.

So Richard embraced him and they parted.

XLIII

To confound Captain Castel, Richard left Arebo and sailed up the Coast in a Zeeland Interloper. There was peace that year between Holland and England; but little of peace between the Dutch West India Company and the English Company of Royal Adventurers. The great fortress at Elmina, which the Dutch had once taken from the Portuguese, was parted by two small bays and a headland from Cape Coast Castle, which the English had lately taken from the Dutch. If their governors exchanged no shots, they could exchange complaints. The English factors had repaired their lodges at Adja and Little Commany; the Dutch Director-General claimed both these places as conquests of De Ruyter's, and Thomas Pearson disputed his pretensions.

Mr. Carey, too, was at war with the Royal Adventurers. Though the Dutch Company's people loved a Free Trader no better than the English did, he might have had good entertainment among them, more especially since he had lived kindly with some of their nation at Arebo. But he did not choose to lie in the rock-built town of Elmina; he lodged at Cabocars, under the English fort. Here were other Interlopers, underselling the Company's officers at the mouth of the Company's guns Cape Coast Castle was no more a freehold than other European forts upon the Coast. It was built on land hired from the people of Fetu, and the garrison was too weak

in men and ordnance to offend the Fetuans (who must be their best allies in the next Dutch war) by spoiling their trade for them.

Mr. Carey had his gold and his papers, but he was poorer than he had ever been before. Besides his men, his house, his gun and his bodily strength, he had lost that God with Whom, like Enoch, he had walked for so many years. He doubted now whether he had truly known God. His thoughts went back to Dr. Alexander Ross and the Copernicans; he saw the world as a wandering planet lit by wandering fires. Its forests were moss upon a stone, its cities colonies of ants. Forest and city alike were without significance to him; but his mind could not reach out through the empty air to Heaven or Hell, he was bound to the earth like Ixion to his wheel. He saw his life now as a play without a plot; it had been full of noise and pain, but there was no meaning in it.

To escape from these thoughts he found two doors, palm wine and brandy. They did not open easily to him, for, though he was not as strong as he had been, he could still carry a great deal of liquor. His custom now was to go into a wine shop early in the day and to drink himself into a stupor. By this occupation, he was somewhat diverted from his quarrel with the Company.

It was in a wine shop that he met Accepted Harrison again. Mr. Harrison wore a patch over one eye and the flesh below it was scarred with powder; but his clothes were more than commonly neat and magnificent.

'Why, Dick,' said he, 'so she has left you too. And you too have a token in remembrance of her.' He glanced at Mr. Carey's hand, which was still wrapped in bandages, and touched the patch over his own eye. 'Let this be our comfort; we were laid low by the handsomest woman that ever came south of Cape Blanco.'

Even this reflection did not comfort Richard, but he was glad to see Mr. Harrison; the world was less empty since his old comrade was alive in it. They sat down and drank together. Harrison was prosperous now; for though, on Mundoo's death at the horn of the rhinoceros, he had failed of his chief aim, (which was no less than to get the sole guardianship of the Trader's sons and the rule of his house,) yet something had fallen to his share. He had come up the coast with a scheme to increase the slave trade at Bonny. Mr. Carey gave him half a bag of gold for the redemption of those Carthaginians who were still prisoners, doing this in the presence of Harrison's slaves, of the Cabocars elders, and of merchants from some twenty nations, both black and white. Harrison swore before them all to keep his part of the bargain, and Richard believed that, for once, he would not fail in it.

They parted like two brothers, who, though they may quarrel, are still held in the bonds of a common recollection, Harrison earnestly entreating Mr. Carey not to ride to the Devil so fast. He must carry his papers to England; he did no good with them here.

'Go to Bristol, Dick. You will be the darling there of every Free Trader. This Company is as dead as Old

Noll; they will soon set a new one afloat and be happy then to buy you off.'

Mr. Carey resolved to follow his counsel, more especially since he found it enforced by the wound in his hand. This breaking out again and the flesh mortifying, he was forced to go to the Company's surgeon to have his arm taken off at the elbow.

He lay for some days between life and death in the Chaplain's room at Cape Coast Castle. He believed that this Chaplain, taking him in under the cloak of charity, had been commissioned to steal his papers; but that did not trouble him; he had already delivered them, with most of his gold, to an honest Free Trader called Captain Peter Wilkinson, who would guard them as the apple of his eye in order to spite the Royal Adventurers.

The Chaplain was a weak man and a great sinner: he spent his days gaming and drinking with the Company's officers and with any strangers who came to the place; but at night the fear of the Lord fell upon him, and he would sit up till morning reading such parts of his Bible as the white ants had not devoured. He dared not lie upon his bed, for his dreams there were of Hell fire.

Richard lay upon the bed in the unswept room where great moths fluttered round the candle. The Chaplain sat with his elbows on the table and the book open before him, his voice now sinking to a mutter, now rising to a scream. The rats, who knew his custom, would run up the table legs and sit twitching their mouths without the

least fear of him. This troubled him; he thought the Devil was in them.

Now Richard learnt that God can indeed perform His great works through small instruments; through this poor creature, the Chaplain, he began to see light. Since his leaving England he had never had the whole Bible in his hands. The preachers of his youth had taken their texts from the Old Testament, and Tom Evans had commonly quoted the Psalms. But the white ants, too, had liked the Old Testament, and the Chaplain was forced to read from the New. When he read that a man should love his enemies, Mr. Carey laughed, remembering how he himself had loved Phillida. Laughing, he was yet comforted; he saw that the God Whom he had offended might be, in part, a creature of his fancy; like the Negroes he had shaped his God after his own imagination. The God Who made heaven and earth, and Whom they too worshipped among their nearer deities, might have, like His Universe, some attributes which Richard had never yet conceived of.

He did not stay long with the Chaplain; while he was still sick he heard that the *Orange Tree* was riding in the bay. He knew that Cape Coast Castle was now no place for him; he bribed the Chaplain's servant to help him to the beach, whence he travelled to Elmina by canoe.

He sailed from Elmina in a Dutch vessel in the November of 1669.

XLIV

It is commonly believed that those who leave the Coast sick will die upon the voyage home Mr. Carey did not die; he recovered a great part of his ancient strength. He had time to do it; his ship was bound first for Fida and then for Curaçao, so that more than a year passed before she reached Holland. She came there at last, well laden with hides and tobacco, without any extraordinary adventures, except that of being chased off the coast of Portugal by two small Algerines. Of these, one came near enough to heave a ton-load of handstones into her; but the wind blowing hard and the seas running pretty high, she escaped from it without being rammed or boarded.

This was a great deliverance; yet not so great to Richard as to others on board, for no part of the cargo was his. While he lay sick at Cape Coast Castle all that remained of his last bag of gold had been changed for some of those false pieces, or kakeras, with which the Negroes contrive to cheat young traders. Whether this fraud had been put upon him by the Chaplain or by his servant Mr. Carey could not tell. Between them they had left him little provision for his journey.

He found himself at Amsterdam with empty pockets, and was happy, after a while, to get a passage in a hoy bound for Dover in the place of one of her crew who had been left sick there. He did not see Dover. His boat, with

a score of others, ran ashore at Deal in the storm and rain. There she was saved by the help of the Deal men, and plundered more than a little in the saving.

On Jan. 6th, 1671, Richard landed at Deal with a few pence and the clothes he stood up in. These, being a round cap and a canvas jacket, made him with his great beard the perfect copy of a Baltic sailor. Having no friends at Deal he resolved to walk to London. Here, at an inn called the Muzzled Bear's Head, he might hope for news of Captain Peter Wilkinson.

There were other travellers upon the road, some on foot and some on horseback, with a few in coaches. They were all splashed with the grey chalk mud, they straggled in a long procession through the thin cold rain across empty downs or between naked hedgerows. The trees were sparsely set to Mr. Carey's eye, the grass nearly colourless, the people very quiet. They walked like ghosts without that continual chatter to which his ears were now accustomed. The wind, blowing through his coat, chilled him to the bone. Only in the tippling houses was there any comfort to be found. There, by the fireside, in the company of his fellow-sailors and of the silent Kentish ploughmen, he spent his last ha'pence before he came to town.

The talk in such places was all of sport or state; of a good bull to be baited, of cocking and wrestling matches, or of the great preparations which the King of France had made against the Dutch. The sailors were all good Protestants and hoped for a war with France to help

their co-religionists. They did not share that hatred of the Dutch which Mr. Carey had found among the African Company's servants. He met one man who openly boasted (after a cup or two) that, being cheated of his pay in the King's service, he had sailed up the Medway in that Dutch fleet which burnt the shipping there in '67.

Parliament had met after a prorogation, and the world longed to know how the Commons would resent the injury done to one of their members who, for some sharp words against the King's women, had had his nose slit by the Duke of Monmouth's troopers. The Duke of York was suspected for a Papist and his son was dying. The conventicle men had grown very bold; Ludlow the Regicide was thought to be in England and a rising was talked of. Whenever Mr. Carey found himself in better company he heard of the Subsidy Bill or of the new imposition on tobacco. He soon perceived that, though the wars were over, he had come into an unquiet peace.

But he had troubles enough of his own to keep his mind from brooding over the public troubles; he came to the Muzzled Bear's Head quite penniless, and learnt that Captain Wilkinson had gone to Bristol.

He had now to find his way to Bristol, and he could not imagine how to do it. If he walked there he must eat on the way. As for going by sea, he could scarcely hope to find another shipmaster who would take a one-armed man. He got no help at the Muzzled Bear, for his clothes were not fine enough to commend him to the landlady.

In this perplexity he plunged into the City, turning his steps towards Paul's, whose nave had been, in his day, the common resort of those who had business or desired to have it. He lost his way there once or twice, for the City was not his City. Here were black shells that the fire had left and gaping holes that once were cellars, all huddled up with booths and new buildings. When he came to Paul's, Paul's had gone; where that great bulk once stood there was nothing now but a few heaps of rubbish. While Mr. Carey still stared up at that void which it had left in the heavens, he was assailed by a wheedling cripple who was soon driven off the ground by two coarsely painted girls. These seized him each by one arm, addressing him with some endearing terms, as though they took him by his dress for a newly discharged seaman with his pay still in his pocket.

He, who knew how far their hopes were disappointed, broke away from them to avoid their reproaches and escaped down a side alley under cover of a lumbering dray. This meeting had put him in a kind of panic; he himself was now one of these poor people, he must beg or starve if he had not the luck to pick pockets. The noise in the streets confused him. It was worse than it had been in his day, for he did not remember to have seen so many coaches as clattered now upon the broken pavements spattering the passers-by with mud and slime. Besides, there were porters with their bales, pack-horses from the country, street vendors crying their wares, and such a swarm of beggars (some of them old soldiers) as gave him

cause to fear that he should find the stream of charity diverted. The sight of these beggars troubled him the more since he had met with very few in Africa, food being there plentiful, and poor men commonly slaves to the rich so that they seldom wanted for a sufficiency. Here, he found, the poor had more to fear than hunger. The rain had stopped falling, but the wind round the houses set his teeth chattering. The sun was shining with a pale and waterish light and no heat at all; he could scarcely think it the same glorious body that had scorched him upon the Coast. He had two bags of gold in Bristol with Captain Wilkinson; but before he got to Bristol he must have money for a night's lodging, or for a drop of liquor with which to warm his stomach.

In this extremity he remembered the Temple, and the thought of it brought him hope; he might find there some of his old companions who would lend him enough to take him to his gold. He turned that way, walking quickly, his chin in his breast and his one hand deep in his pocket.

The Temple was not burnt. It was finer, indeed, than he remembered it; after the low African houses its tall buildings filled him with a kind of awe. In these narrow courts it was already evening, a blue fog crept up from the river and lights shone in the windows here and there. Mr. Carey remembered that one of those windows had been his.

The porter was at his elbow enquiring what he did there: a new porter since his time. He began to ask for his old companions, and the man knew none of them

until he came to one whom Mr. Carey remembered as an idle, sparkish lad. The porter confessed that he knew that person well. 'And if your honour will wait,' said he, 'you shall meet him here; for I see him now bearing down upon us.'

There appeared indeed a pursy, red-faced gentleman rustling in silk, with a boy behind him to carry his bag. Mr. Carey stepped forward to meet him, but was raked by such a pair of sharp eyes as put him quite out of countenance. He could not lay bare his condition to the owner of those eyes and be not remembered, perhaps, at the end of all he could say. If he must beg, he would beg from a stranger when hunger had given him more courage. He turned and stalked out of the Temple precincts, leaving the porter to guffaw behind him.

He walked briskly down Fleet Street, as though he had something to take him that way more than another, and crashed into a spruce young gentleman who let out an oath or two and presently embraced him. 'Mr. Carey? Lord, Sir! We have expected you these twelve months.'

Tony Godwin, with his purse, his lodging and all that he had, was wholly at Mr. Carey's command. He had so far mastered his friend's affairs that he had seen Captain Peter Wilkinson and knew the merchant to whose care the gold and the papers were confided.

XLV

So Mr. Carey had his gold again with some hopes of getting more; but his hopes did not last as long as the gold; they were quite worn out in a fortnight.

There was no compensation to be got out of Captain Castel; Captain Castel was in prison for debt. All that Mr. Carey had from that quarter was a visit from a faded, pretty woman, Captain Castel's wife, and from a threadbare lawyer, her brother. Richard supposed at first that they had come to beg off his claim, but he soon found that that was not their purpose. 'Sir,' said the lady, 'you ask a great fortune of my husband. He will satisfy you wholly in time, when some expectations he has are fulfilled. But he can't pay you when he's dead and he can't live without eating. Five guineas are no more than a trifle to you, who claim so much from us already. If you'll give me but five guineas now, he will pay them you back with the rest that you say he owes you.'

Mr. Carey gave her six, finding a kind of sublimity in this degree of impudence. But her impudence quite gave way at that; she burst into tears. 'Oh, Sir!' said she, 'this is noble. And we have six children!'

Richard, who had no hope of the Captain's expectations being fulfilled, saw that he must be content with this compliment. There was no hope of compensation from the Company, which disavowed all Castel's actions; and, indeed, the Company itself was scarcely better able

to pay than he. It was nearly bankrupt, and there was much talk of a new Company to be raised upon its ruins. To this new Company, the Royal African Company, Mr. Carey might perhaps sell his Charter.

As for the fortune he had lost in the war, he would never see that again; those estates which he had forfeited through his fidelity to the King had been sold in Oliver's time to several persons who were now protected in their enjoyment of them by the Act of Oblivion. Richard's case was a hard one, but no harder than that of many another Cavalier. In the meanwhile he could find many people who would help to spend the gold he had. Tony's friends, although they were quite sated with stories of their fathers' valour in the wars, yet longed to see a person of whom such extraordinary things were told. Captain Wilkinson's merchant and his friends in the City hoped still to be avenged upon the Company through Richard. Besides all these, Mr. Carey happened to fall in with some high Cavaliers and others of good quality whom he had seen before when he was with his father at Oxford. So he went to Court, and found it not very much unlike those courts that he had known in Africa, the courtiers living in a high degree of want and luxury, and the King himself going sometimes without clean linen because his servants took away his shirts and bands instead of the wages that were not paid to them.

For all its poverty it was still splendid; but Richard soon grew weary of its splendours and of all those diversions which the town afforded. He had lost his appetite

for such marvels as kept his new acquaintance for ever on the run. Only one miracle in art or nature had the power to move him, and that was Phillida. He had seen her only once since he came to England : at Whitehall, at the theatre there, when the *Siege of Granada* was acted in it with its glorious scenes and perspectives. The perspectives were quite lost on Richard; he only saw Phillida sitting a great way off laughing with five or six gentlemen. He had stayed so long in London hoping to see her again; but chance had preserved him from another meeting, and he had never had the courage to wait upon her.

He began to consider what he ought to do. He saw that he had stayed in Africa too long. Had he come to England ten years sooner, he might have made his fortune as a soldier or in his old profession of the law. Even in Africa (if he had taken Harrison's advice there) he might by now have become a considerable merchant. But he had wasted his life in a dream; those of his old friends who were not dead were far advanced in their several professions, and he was no further advanced than Tony. He was still not as old as Colonel Godwin had been when he married Phillida Wilcox; but Richard was not a Colonel Godwin, he had nothing to offer young Phillida. With what he might hope to get for his patent from the new Company, he had enough now to buy an estate worth two or three hundred a year. That was no provision for a courtieress. The best thing that he could hope for now was to find an honest woman, some farmer's widow

perhaps, who would join her fortune to his and help him to set up as a husbandman for the rest of his days.

But he could not escape without seeing Phillida; Tony was resolved that he should speak with her. Tony was more resigned than he had been before to his sister's government. She had persuaded his uncle to make a lawyer of him, and he was grateful to her for this, and so much used, besides, to hearing her praised that he was no longer too proud to obey her. Yet in one thing still he found fault with her : he wished to see her married, and she was very nice in the choice of a husband. Her aunt was of his way of thinking, but her uncle was wholly led by her. Tony lamented this. She had already refused two of his particular friends, besides a country gentleman and two great fortunes in the City. She said that she would only have a Lord. ' And that's ridiculous,' said Tony. ' The truth is, her head is turned. She is well enough, but not so extraordinarily handsome. She is almost turned twenty, and will die a maid unless she can be brought to reason soon.'

His plan was that Mr. Carey should bring her to reason. ' She may listen to you, Sir. She will not hear me.' There was a good young man nibbling round her now. ' A Baronet,' said Tony, ' which is as near a Lord as she will get.' He begged his friend, if he must leave Town, at least to reason with her first. Tony's importunity left Mr. Carey no choice.

Phillida's uncle had a rich new house full of gilding and carved work. The paintings on the stairs were not

by Rubens, but they were done after his manner. Mr. Carey was brought into a great light room where a dozen ladies and as many gentlemen conversed very merrily together. The Baronet was in eclipse; there was a Lord there, the Duke of Buckingham.

When Mr. Carey came in, this incomparable nobleman was talking with Phillida. She sat a little apart from the others on a painted chest set against the wall, a fine thing, but old-fashioned, which the merchant had had from his father. She was all in the new fashion, in a gold-coloured satin laced with blue and her hair tied up with pearls and with knots of blue ribbon. She was waving a great blue and gold fan, as she had waved a leaf in the forest. Her neck and shoulders were more like pearl than ivory; there was a kind of shimmer on them reflected from her dress. He had thought her once a flower, but he saw now that she was a jewel; she was like that golden pebble which the Negro soldier had thrown into his shaft at Pepito. He wished himself in the shaft still; he feared that she had more power to torment him than ever had Ezekiel Boone.

He could watch her, without seeming to watch her, in a great hanging glass. A friend of Tony's greeted him, a round-faced young gentleman with cheeks like milk and roses. While they were talking Mr. Carey saw his own face in the glass. It was harsh and scarred, burnt to several colours and wrinkled near the eyes. He had shaved off his beard, but only to show the world that he had a long, fierce chin. Wrinkles and a burnt skin were

not then in fashion; he believed that they would do him no good here. He remembered that flesh is as grass, and that his fresh young gentleman had a skull under his face. Phillida herself was a mortal, her beauty the thing of a day. He remembered that Tony had said she was not extraordinarily handsome: if she was not for him, in this city of London there were other women as fair as she who would be thankful for his few guineas. At Carthage, when he wished to be freed from her, he had told himself of her faults; he knew better now; he reckoned up her virtues and perceived that they were not rare.

He had good ears. He heard the Duke say, 'Who is your tall gentleman, all brown, dressed in brown, with a brown periwig?'

'That is the steward on my African estate. Give me leave to present him to your Grace.' Then she signed to Mr. Carey, and he came near, and she smiled at him.

When Phillida smiled at Richard the walls that he had built himself fell in sudden ruin. He had told himself that she was no more than a woman like other women; but he had told himself this tale in vain, for, whatever she was, he was her slave for ever. She had been fatal to his Carthage as Helen was to Troy; he remembered the ashes of his house, and his dead soldiers, and Domingo's little boy. To him, as to his people, she had brought nothing but pain; yet he knew that his worst pain of all must be to live without her.

His Grace had heard of Mr. Carey. 'Lord!' said he,

not more than half contemptuous, 'here's the Prince of Carthage!'

Mr. Carey felt that contempt and shared it; he might once have had Phillida, and he had let her go. He fancied that she shared it too. 'You have brought me a monkey, Mr. Carey?' said she.

'No, Madam.'

'Or a parrot? Or an elephant's tooth?'

'No, Madam.'

'No, Madam!' cried Buckingham. 'Your steward is a dull fellow.'

'Stewards are mostly so. We shall soon be duller. We shall come to a calculation of ostrich eggs and coconuts. I advise your Grace to find some diversion elsewhere. Mr. Carey, tell me of my friends. My brother says you had much loss among them. I trust that honest Mr. Domingo is well.'

'I cannot tell you how he is to-day. He and his wife were alive a year ago.'

'So, the creature has a wife and the wife is alive too. Madam Phillida, you have no luck.'

'No, my Lord, I have none. Will you leave me to talk with my steward? You courtiers cannot learn that we citizens must look after our business. Mr. Carey, will you tell me more?'

'I have nothing to tell you that you cannot hear from Tony.'

'He says that your hand is not cured.'

'It is no trouble to me now, Madam.'

She looked at his empty sleeve and turned a little pale. He thought that she would have said, 'Poor Richard!' or, 'It was done for my sake.' He was low enough then to take even these crumbs. But she only said, 'You must wear a hook, Sir. There's a porter in our street that has lost his hand and does very well with a hook.'

Richard thought she had become a mighty great philosopher; the Duke of Buckingham proclaimed her such. When he had finished she said, 'What will you do now, Mr. Carey?'

The Duke answered for him, 'The Prince of Carthage will claim compensation. He will see justice done on the rascally Papists who burnt his royal palace.' He said this knowing very well that Captain Castel was not a Papist, but knowing too that the Captain had once been a servant of the Duke of York's, who was suspected of being one. The Duke of Buckingham was all for the King's divorce, which the Duke of York opposed, and he liked to see the Duke of York harassed. Since the Duke of York had so great a share in the Royal African Company, Mr. Carey's claim for compensation, if it were pressed, might harass him extremely.

Mr. Carey had been long enough in England to understand this very well; but his old prejudice in favour of loyalty made him lean to the Duke of York's faction. Besides he did not care, at that time, for any Duke under the sun, but only for punishing Phillida. He said, 'I will waive the compensation. I am now to find a wife with a dowry.'

He had spoken louder than he knew; all the company was staring at him. The Duke swore under his breath; the gentleman who had first greeted Richard saw his way to fame. 'With a dowry,' he simpered, 'and with beauty too, Sir.'

'Sir,' said Mr. Carey, 'I will waive beauty, if the lady be honest.'

'Oh!' cried Phillida. She had recovered herself, if she had ever felt any emotion, and was airing her fan affectedly. Everyone was laughing. They laughed with Mr. Carey, and not at him. They relished his wit. Mr. Carey saw that his life had been wasted indeed; he might have been the ornament of Court and City.

But he was committed to speak of the creature that he must seek out and marry. He said, 'I purpose to live in the country. My wife must stay content there. I'll have no running to town.'

Buckingham swore again. 'That's damned hard!'

But Phillida said, 'There are women that can endure the country. What next, Sir?'

'She must boil and bake,' said Richard.

'And brew, too,' said Phillida. 'A country housekeeper should brew at home.'

Richard thought of the brewer's fat widow who lodged in the same house as he did. He rememberd that once he had lain with his head on Phillida's knee and that she had kissed him and called him her dear.

'And spin and weave,' said he.

'No, Sir. Not weave. You would drive a poor woman

too hard. There are weavers in Gloucestershire (if you choose to live there) who would make up her thread very cheaply.'

'Then she need not weave,' said he. He suffered exquisite pain because she could talk of his wife without any jealousy when he could not bear to think of her husband. 'She must fatten her poultry,' said he, 'and milk the cows.' He did not look at her but at a piece of tapestry above her head. It showed Æneas leaving Dido. 'But Dido left me,' he thought.

Phillida was saying, 'She would keep her dairy, of course.'

Richard's heart was crying out, 'Phillida, pity me!' but his tongue only said, 'And feed the pigs and keep the bees.'

She threw down her fan. 'No, Richard. You must feed the pigs yourself. Bees are very well, and I will milk your cows. But your pigs I will not feed.'

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